THE RISE OF THE GUISE FAMILY (1515-1560)

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ABSTRACT

THE RISE OF THE GUISE FAMILY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR POLITICAL POLICY (1515-1560)

The Guise family established themselves in France during the reign of Louis XII and within half a century they had assumed complete control over the French kingdom. This thesis attempts to analyze the methods by which they accumulated such political power and the manner in which they eventually employed it. The initial sections of the paper concern the establishment of the diplomatic and military alliances which served as the basis of Guise strength. Then, the thesis concentrates upon their employment of these connections in building an internal coalition dedicated to opposing the centralization policy of the Montmorency administration. Finally, the text analyzes the reversal in Guise politics as they assumed power under Francis II. In this position, they continued the centralization and economic retrenchment which they had previously opposed, and demonstrated their flexibility within the altering economic and religious climate of the sixteenth century.

THE RISE OF THE GUISE FAMILY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR POLITICAL POLICY, (1515-1560).

by

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PREFACE

This thesis is primarily intended to provide a political study of the rise of the Guise family during the course of the sixteenth century European expansion. The work will concentrate upon determining the extent to which their advance was caused by personal programs and decisions, or allowed by the changing political, economic and social structures of the century.

In the past, historians have all too frequently portrayed Guise policies as the rigid expression of Roman Catholic, or Ultramontagne dogmatism. De Thou, Baird, Forneron and Bouillé have all seen the family as arbitrarily advancing Catholic supremacy despite all opposition, and even Lucien Romier has often resorted to the Ultramontagne explanation. Yet, Guise leadership was extremely flexible and using the available political connections, they consistently tended toward the expedient decision. From their 1504 arrival in France, to their sixteen months of rule in 1559 and 1560, it was the desire for power which shaped Guise policy. Yet, their rapid advance would have been impossible in another age and it was the very instability

of sixteenth century institutions which initially accounts for their rise and finally explains the vulnerability of their rule. Thus, it is the purpose of this study to analyze the interacting nature of Guise politics and sixteenth century change; the manner in which their policy profited and suffered from the emerging society.

This study of Guise policy was originally proposed by my tutor, Professor H. W. Senior and I should like to thank him for his aid and encouragement in preparing this thesis. I would also like to express my gratitude to Professor C. C. Bayley of the McGill Department of History, whose bibliographical assistance was very helpful during the early stages of this thesis. Then, for his economic suggestions, I am grateful to Professor Claude Sutto of the Institut d'études médiévales, of l'Université de Montréal.

For obtaining much of the material used in this study, I would like to thank the Interlibrary Loan Department of Redpath Library, McGill University. I would also like to express my appreciation for the aid and services rendered by the staffs of Redpath Library, Bibliothèque de Saint-Sulpice and Widener and Houghton Libraries of Harvard University.

Finally, I am most grateful for the interest and understanding of my typist, Mrs. R. de la Ronde.

ABBREVIATIONS OF WORKS FREQUENTLY CITED

Actes de Fr. I.	Catalogue des Actes de François Ier, 1515-1530. Published by Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques. Paris, 1887.
AHR.	American Historical Review.
Bouillé.	Réné de Bouillé. Histoire des ducs de Guise. Four Volumes. Paris, 1849.
Cal. S.P., Simancas.	Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs preserved principally in the Archives of Simancas, Elizabeth, 1558-1567. Edited by Martin A. S. Hume. London, 1892.
Cal. S.P., Spanish.	Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers relating to the Negociations between England and Spain. Edited by A. S. Hume and Royall Tyler. London, 1912, 1914 and 1954.
Cal. S.P., Venice.	Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English affairs existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice, 1555-1580. Edited by Rawdon Brown and G. Cavendish Bentinck. London, 1877, 1884 and 1890.
Cal. S.P., Edward VI.	Calendar of State Papers of the Reign of Edward VI, 1547-1553. Edited by W. B. Turnbull. London, 1861.
Cal. S.P., For., Eliz.	Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1561. Edited by Rev. Joseph Stevenson. London, 1863 and 1865.

Cal. S.P., For., Mary.	Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Series, of the Reign of Mary, 1553-1558. Edited by William B. Turnbull. London, 1861.
Cimber et Danjou.	Archives Curieuses de l'Histoire de France depuis Louis XI jusqu'à Louis XVIII. Edited by L. Cimber and F. Danjou. First Series. Paris, 1835.
Forneron.	Henri Forneron. Les Ducs de Guise et leur epoque. Two Volumes. Paris, 1877.
Guise. "Mémoires".	François de Lorraine duc de Guise. "Mémoires-Journeaux". Contained in Nouvelle Collection des Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de France depuis le XIIIe siècle jusqu'à la fin du XVIIIe. Edited by Michaud et Poujoulat. Vol. VI, Paris, 1839.
Haton.	Claude Haton. Mémoires de Claude Haton contenant le récit des évènements accomplis de 1553 à 1582 principalement dans la Champagne et la Brie. Vol. I. Edited by Félix Bourguelot. Collection de Documents Inédits. Paris, 1857.
La Place.	Pierre de La Place. Commentaires de l'éstat de la Religion et République soubs les Rois Henry, François seconds et Charles neufieme. Paris, 1565.
La Planche.	Louis Regnier de La Planche. Histoire de l'éstat de France, tant de la république que de la religion, sous le règne de François II. Extracts published by Berthold Zeller. Paris, 1890.

Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc.	Négociations Diplomatique de la France avec la Toscane. Edited by Giuseppe Canestrini. Collection de Documents Inédits. Vols. II and III. Paris, 1861.
Nég., Lettres et pièces-Fr. II.	Négociations, Lettres et pièces diverses relatives au regne de François II. Edited by L. Paris. Collection de Documents Inédits. Paris, 1841.
Petitot.	Collection des Mémoires relatifs à l'Histoire de France. Edited by M. Petitot. Paris, 1823.
Rélations-vénitiens.	Rélations des Ambassadeurs vénitiens sur les affaires de France au XVI^{e} siècle. Edited by M. N. Tommaseo. Vol. I. Collection de Documents Inédits. Paris, 1838.
RH.	Revue Historique.
Romier. Orig. Polit.	Lucien Romier. Les origines politiques des Guerres de Religion. Two Volumes. Paris, 1913.
Romier. Amboise.	Lucien Romier. La Conjuration d'Amboise, règne et la mort de François II. Paris, 1923.
S.P., For. & Dom., Henry VIII.	Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, preserved in the Public Record Office, the British Museum and Elsewhere in England. 1515-1523 and 1537. Edited by J. S. Brewer and James Gardiner. London, 1864 and 1890.
Zeller. Metz.	Gaston Zeller. La réunion de Metz à la France, 1552-1568. Two volumes. Paris et Londres, 1926.

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CHAPTER I

THE "NEW ARISTOCRACY" AND THE RISE OF THE GUISE FAMILY

In 1522 Constable Charles de Bourbon deserted the French kingdom to join the imperial forces of Charles V. His departure was indicative of the degree to which the old nobility felt threatened by the monarchial supremacy of Francis I and while the feudal lords might have risen to challenge this "new monarchy", the Constable's retreat deprived them of leadership and confirmed the end of their independent status. The Bourbon titles and estates were confiscated, then distributed among the "new aristocracy", rewarding the king's followers and solidifying his military support. As a prominent ally of the "new monarchy", Claude de Guise received the position of Lieutenant-General of Burgundy, acquiring responsibility for the defenses of all northeastern France.

The whole structure of sixteenth century French society was altered through this process of building such new families as the Guise upon the ruins of the feudal nobility. This was the ultimate solution of Francis I, who had inherited the dual problem of continuing the internal consolidation of royal power while expanding the

frontiers of France. The conflicting element in these goals had been the feudal nobility, the powerful independent lords, who remained the greatest internal opposition to centralized monarchy. Yet, while opposing the royal power, these nobles provided the military basis for the kingdom and were indispensable for French expansion or defense. Francis was brought into direct conflict with these nobles through his dual determination both to solidify his position as monarch and to continue the Italian gains of his predecessor, Louis XII. The new rule thus represented the first of several sixteenth century attempts to resolve the dichotomy in the internal and external aims of the French monarchy.

In the traditional manner, the reign of Francis had begun with energetic proposals for new French campaigns and the whole feudal order had united behind the suggestions of further Italian conquests. An effective army being the first prerequisite for such expansion, Francis moved to unify the French command and increase its forces. The vacant office of Constable, the military commander-in-chief, was awarded to Charles, Duke de Bourbon, on the twelfth of January 1515.[1] At the same time Francis increased the size of the royal army as he authorized the creation of a company of

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[1] Actes de Fr. I, Vol. I, p. 7.

fifty lances under the sieur de Châtillon.[2] This increase continued through the early months of 1515, as in late March a third company of sixty archers was commissioned under Raoul de Vernon.[3] The goal of these efforts became apparent in early August 1515, as Francis crossed the Alps with a force of 3,000 men at arms and 30,000 foot soldiers. This campaign continued the policy of expansion and reached its climax on the fourteenth of September with the decisive French victory at Marignano.

Even within this period of foreign success, internal problems persisted, as Francis was continually challenged by divisions which threatened the unity of French society. When the great nobles and military elements could be turned against a foreign enemy, the dissension within France was minimal. Yet, during peacetime the feudal orders invariably reasserted their independent rights and the unpaid armies consistently returned to ravage the peasantry. For this reason, the loyalty of the great nobility had to be bought with bribes and pensions in ever increasing amounts. One of the first recipients of these payments was Louis d'Orléans, Duke of Longueville, who was given 1,600 livres

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[2] Ibid., p. 8.

[3] Ibid., p. 27.

from the war treasury during the month of May 1516.[4] Even more vital was the necessity of ensuring a disciplined army which would not return to pillage France. To provide this and to secure the future loyalty of his forces, Francis ordered the généraux des finances to pay the back wages of 5,000 foot soldiers, who had given service in the campaign of 1515.[5] Francis had felt that he could secure internal stability with the support of these two elements, yet the feudal restrictions upon his power eventually made the arrangement impossible.

In 1515 the frontiers of France still remained undefined, having altered from treaty to treaty throughout the late Middle Ages. This factor rendered the king's insistence upon internal unity all the more important since any emerging national consciousness had been continually retarded by the independent and xenophobe spirit of certain towns and provinces. It was along the eastern boundary, in the area of the ancient kingdom of Lothair, that the question of consolidation was most vital.[6] From this territory, France had annexed the provinces of Burgundy, Champagne,

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[4] Ibid., p. 81.

[5] Ibid., p. 80.

[6] Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, pp. 21-24.

Dauphiny and Provence, yet these areas retained separate administrations, legal systems and often languages.[7]

Beside the portions included in France, there existed a whole range of imperial principalities which had been carved out of this post-Carolingian kingdom. Within the Empire, these duchies, towns and bishoprics resisted centralization through a policy of balancing the support of the French king against that of the Holy Roman Emperor. From the Low Countries through Lorraine, Burgundy and down to the Northern Italian states this balance of power concept was the very key to independent survival.[8] Thus, the persisting notion of Lothairia confronted France with a separate element inside its own borders and a neighboring series of independent principalities protecting the Holy Roman Empire.

Among the nobles along this border, the House of Lorraine followed one of the most successful political patterns, guaranteeing its own independence while assuming positions of power in both France and the Empire. The Duke de Lorraine was able to play this

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[7]Lucien Romier, Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis. Fourth edition. Paris, 1925, Vol. I, pp. 79 and 80.

[8]Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, pp. 34-36.

double role through his vassalage to both the Emperor and the King of France. For the duchy of Lorraine he had taken the feudal oath and promised service to the Holy Roman Emperor. But the duke also paid homage to the king, from whom he held the counties of Guise and Aumale, the baronies of Mayenne, Joinville, Elbeuf, Beauvre Sable, la Ferte-Bernard and the seigneuries of Harcourt, Longjuneau, Egaltier, Regond and Lambasque.[9] It was this dual commitment, this subinfeudation, which made the duke a free agent, acting within both the French and imperial structures and attempting to assure the independence of his own possessions.

It was Lorraine's status in both France and the Empire which made his support critical to the expansion of either power. From their perspective, the French kings were interested in gaining his loyalty and using him to create discord between the German princes and their lord, the Emperor. That France would extend every consideration to Lorraine was evident in 1515, as Francis I agreed to wait until the majority of the young duke to receive hommage for his French lands,[10] yet the

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[9]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 39. Also see Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 45.

[10]Actes de Fr. I, Vol. I, p. 24.

king still permitted the Regent Duchess of Lorraine to appoint all royal officials acting in these territories.[11] Then, during his attempts to gain support for the imperial election of 1519, Francis awarded the seigneurie of Chatel-sur-Moselle to the young duke.[12] This continuing interest in Lorraine, indicates a clear tendency to regard the duchy as a pivotal factor in influencing Franco-German relationships.

From the perspective of Lorraine, the French connections were extremely useful in counterbalancing any tendency toward centralization within the Empire. To strengthen these ties, Duke Réné II had sent his second son Claude to be educated at the French court of Louis XII. At the same time his heir Antoine remained in Lorraine, being reared as an imperial vassal.[13] Then in 1506, Claude was naturalized and became officially attached to the French court. This family division was perpetuated on the tenth of December, 1508, when Duke Réné died, leaving Claude full title to his French holdings, while Antoine obtained all rights

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[11] Ibid., p. 27.

[12] Ibid., p. 117.

[13] Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 45.

to the Imperial lands and titles of the duchy.[14] In 1515, Claude's rapid advancement began as he was appointed gentleman of the chamber by his former companion, the newly-crowned king, Francis I.[15]

Since the policy of Lorraine was determined by external forces, it shifted gradually toward France as a result of the dealings of Claude and the receptiveness of Francis I. Yet, the more practical reason for this alteration was the increasing threat of a strong Hapsburg Emperor. From his position at the French court, Claude dealt through Lorraine, attempting to influence the imperial electors, promoting the cause of King Francis and continually stressing that Charles of Ghent must be defeated. His initiatives were in complete accord with the policy of the Regent Duchess of Lorraine, since as early as 1517 she had held a French pension for supporting the candidacy of the French monarch.[16] By the end of April 1519, the English Ambassador Thomas Spinelly noted that the whole French effort at

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[14] Ibid., Vol. I, pp. 45 and 46.

[15] Actes de Fr. I, Vol. I, p. 5.

[16] F. M. Mignet, Rivalité de François Ier et de Charles-Quint. Paris, 1886, Vol. I, p. 124.

influencing the election had become centered in Lorraine, yet even at that point he contended that Francis' cause was hopeless.[17] Later that year, the electoral victory of Charles V brought forward a strong personality who would challenge any further French expansion, or any intervention in the duchy of Lorraine. At that point the mutual action of the French and German branches of the House was restricted and any independent Lorraine policy was formulated within the framework of either France or the Empire.

While the duchy of Lorraine remained tied within the Empire, Claude, comte de Guise, had committed himself to France. His support for Francis' election had won him the territory of Sormery in November 1519.[18] At the time of the king's electoral defeat, Claude had further solidified his position with the monarch by offering to invade the Empire and openly confront Charles.[19] While thus establishing himself in France, Claude was determined to retain his independence and his position as a foreign prince, rather than a French commoner.[20] Thus,

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[17]Spinelly to the Privy Council, 28 April 1519. Cal. S.P., Henry VIII, Vol. III, p. 70.

[18]Actes de Fr. I, Vol. I, p. 157.

[19]Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 63.

[20]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 39.

from the very beginning, his branch of the family had attempted to secure high position while constantly emphasizing their rights as a sovereign house.

Claude's brother, Cardinal Jean, was the most important factor in reinforcing the independent claims of Lorraine's cadet branch. Jean's position as Bishop of Metz had first attracted the attention of Francis I, when he was contesting the imperial election. At that time Jean had been part of the Lorraine group negotiating for votes among the German princes. In 1518 just prior to the election, Jean was rewarded with a Cardinal's hat through Pope Leo X.[21] After a Roman visit in January of 1521, his importance to France became even greater for Lorraine succeeded in establishing strong connections within the papal court.[22] Upon his return to France, Cardinal Jean's new position was recognized by his selection as French representative at a conference with England and the Empire.[23] Then, as Francis I returned to his plans of Italian expansion, France became even more dependent upon church support and upon the

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[21]Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 97. Contains the list of appendages which accompanied Jean's new position.

[22]Ibid., Vol. I, p. 98.

[23]Actes de Fr. I, Vol. I, p. 98.

initiatives of Cardinal Jean to obtain that support. It was this royal dependence which permitted the Cardinal and comte de Guise to have complete access to the sources of power in France. These contacts in turn, enabled them to construct a Guise political base within the court and army, and to reinforce this internal foundation through their foreign alliances.

Guise policy harmonized perfectly with the aims of Francis I, who intended simultaneously to work toward the foreign and domestic objectives of the French monarchy. Beyond France, he challenged Charles V by continuing the policy of Italian intervention, then within his kingdom, Francis began the creation of a body of loyal supporters through whom he could eliminate his dependence upon the armies of the feudal nobles.[24] For these new allies, the king depended primarily upon the rising generation of lesser nobles and military

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[24]This discussion is based upon the definition of a nobleman by H. Beaune, "Vivre noblement, c'était jouir publiquement des privilèges nobilaires, être exempt de la taille et des autres charges roturières, posséder des fiefs, être admis aux assemblées de la noblesse, porter l'épée, serviv à l'armée, ne faire aucun acte de dérogeance, comme l'exercise des arts manuels ou le commerce." Printed in Jean-Richard Bloch, L'Annoblissement en France au temps de François Ier. Paris, 1934, p. 31.

commanders, those groups which had profited most from the twenty years of Italian campaigning.[25] These wars had always been unpopular with the old nobles, since they were continually required to sacrifice rentes and territorial holdings to meet the persistent summons of the feudal ban and arrière-ban.[26] Yet, by their military competence and economic prosperity, the non-noble commanders and bureaucrats had slowly displaced the old nobles within the armies and even undermined their positions within the court.

Edouard Perroy has demonstrated that social mobility among the noble classes had begun long before the coming of Francis I. Citing the 215 noble lignages in the county of Forez, Perroy has shown that sixty-six of these became extinct during the thirteenth century, eighty in the course of the fourteenth century and that by the sixteenth century, only thirty-one of the original lines remained.[27] While death was the most

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[25]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 46.

[26]Elizabeth S. Teall, "The Seigneur of Renaissance France; Advocate or Oppressor?", Journal of Modern History, 37 (June, 1965), p. 146.

[27]Edouard Perroy, "Social Mobility Among the French Noblesse in the later Middle Ages", Past and Present, 21 (April, 1962), p. 31.

common reason for the extinction of these old families, their loss of noble status was often attributed to economic failure and Perroy argues that great numbers of lesser nobles were so poor that they lived little better than their peasant neighbors.[28] Jean-Richard Bloch has noted that the financial distress of the nobility was reflected in the numerous parlement decisions prohibiting them from any form of commercial enterprise.[29] Yet, the ranks of the local nobility were continually increased by the roturière, the common peasants and merchants who could pay the amount specified for non-nobles to acquire the fief and status of a nobleman.[30] Marc Bloch, in his classic work, contended that by the end of the fifteenth century this process of annoblissements par prescription had made great progress toward reducing the difference in property relationships between the noble and peasant classes.[31]

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[28] Ibid., p. 29.

[29] Jean-Richard Bloch, L'Annoblissement en France au temps de François Ier, Paris, 1934, p. 98.

[30] Ibid., p. 44. The ordonnance de Montilz specified the duty as 47,500 livres tournois.

[31] Marc Bloch, Les charactères originaux de l'histoire rurale française. Paris, 1961, Vol. I, p. 154.

While land transfers had increasingly altered the ranks of the lesser nobility, Francis' promotion of commoners began to affect the status of the great lords. Annoblissement personnel was the vehicle by which the king created his desired class of "Renaissance seigneurs", the class through which he intended to alleviate his dependence upon the great feudal nobles. His whole initiative toward breaking the power of the entrenched nobility was prompted in 1522 by the alleged conspiracy and eventual treason of the Constable de Bourbon. Francis thereafter created numerous nobles both to support his position as the highest power in France and to provide him with the necessary income to continue his costly Italian Wars. Thus began the alteration in the ranks of the high nobility, as between his coronation and 1600, Francis created the unprecedented number of twenty-eight new peerages.[32] Still greater were the changes in the lower aristocracy, where Jean-Richard Bloch has contended that the 180 annoblissements during the reign of Francis, bear significant proof of the affluence of large section of commoners.[33]

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[32]J. R. Major, "The Crown and the Aristocracy in Renaissance France", AHR, 69 (April, 1964), p. 631.

[33]Jean-Richard Bloch, op. cit., p. 195.

Both Claude de Guise and Jean, Cardinal de Lorraine were included within this new class of military leaders and bureaucrats. Claude's military reputation had been secured at Marginano in 1515 and had made him an important supporter of Francis I. In Bonnivet's 1521 expedition to reconquer Spanish Navarre, Louise de Savoy had cited Claude for his capture of Fontarebie, the only major success of the campaign.[34] Simultaneously, Cardinal Jean, as an accomplished courtier, had worked within the French Renaissance court, seeking to promote the arts through his patronage while attracting supporters through his largesse.[35] It was this class of new men which Francis felt could erase his reliance upon the great nobles, enabling him to construct both a strong state and a disciplined army.

This policy had forced the 1522 desertion of the Constable de Bourbon, yet his departure signified the triumph of the "new monarchy" and the victory of the "new aristocracy". Following the flight of Bourbon, Francis became totally committed to destroying the . . .

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[34]Forneron, Vol. I, pp. 23-24.

[35]Ibid., p. 42.

power of the old nobles and creating a loyal following of "Renaissance seigneurs". In accordance with this policy, he had granted the office of Lieutenant-General of Burgundy to a member of his "new aristocracy", Claude de Guise.[36] Even during the tenure of the Bourbon lieutenant Tremouille, Claude had requested this post since it placed him in close proximity to his relations in Lorraine and his supporters in Germany.[37] Francis then moved to consolidate his exposed eastern frontier, appointing Guise as Governor of Champagne, thus effectively charging him with border defenses from the Alps to Flanders.[38] With Claude to protect his eastern flank, Francis again led his troops into Italy, this time taking them to the fateful slaughter at Pravia.[39] The imperial victory there, in late February of 1525, brought the capture of King Francis and the destruction of his armies. For the Council of Regency within France, it was a time of great uncertainty since such such imperial advisors as Alva and Bourbon insisted upon

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[36] Actes de Fr. I., Vol. I, p. 353.

[37] Forneron, Vol. I, p. 32.

[38] Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 75.

[39] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 75. Bouillé questions Francis' motives for leaving Claude behind, implying that the King, after the defection of Bourbon, may have suspected the power which Guise had acquired. This interpretation seems unfounded since Francis left Guise in charge of the whole Eastern border and placed him on the Council of Regency.

the complete conquest of France.[40]

The crisis was averted as Charles V chose not to invade France, yet Francis I remained in a Spanish prison until the end of January 1526 and most of the capable French nobles had fallen at Pavia. Within this power vacuum, the military competence and diplomatic contacts of the Guise family enabled them to solidify their position at the French court. Upon his return to France, the king was faced with the necessity of rebuilding the nation and rewarding those who had preserved its unity throughout his absence; and the rewards were readily available, for the Pavia slaughter had left vacancies in scores of French titles, offices and fiefs. Having been rewarded with territories and pensions during the regency period,[41] Claude de Lorraine benefited anew upon the king's return. Thus, in 1548 as the county of Guise was raised to the status of a duchy, Claude became the first foreign-born gentilhomme to be elevated to the French peerage.[42] Almost ten months later, in October

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[40] H. Lemonnier, Histoire de la France depuis les origines jusqu'a la Révolution. Edited by Ernest Lavisse. Paris, 1903, Vol. V, second part, p. 39.

[41] Actes de Fr. I, Vol. I, p. 400, on March 19, 1525 Claude had been granted the holdings of St-Dizier-en-Perthois. Also p. 423, on Oct. 20, 1525 the regent had ordered that Claude be paid 4,000 livres tournois above his ordinary pension.

[42] Ibid., p. 543.

of 1528, the seigneuries of Lamballe and Moncontour were added to the possessions of the new Duke de Guise.[43]

These substantial acquisitions of the House of Guise were by no means isolated promotions, but were all a part of Francis' overall plan to create a new and loyal aristocracy. Even more substantial were the gains of another minor noble, Anne de Montmorency, for by 1520 he had risen to the post of first gentleman of the king's chamber.[44] Then, following the Bourbon desertion, Montmorency had received the former Constable's position as governor of Languedoc.[45] Similar promotions had advanced the houses of the Admiral de Bonnivet, the Duke de Nevers and the Admiral de Brion. The grants and promotions distributed after Francis' return from Spanish captivity had affected nearly every member of this "new aristocracy". The monarch's goal was to solidify his position as a strong Renaissance prince regardless of the cost, and the "Renaissance seigneurs" were the class through which he intended to achieve this goal. Their initial positions within the aristocracy

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[43] Ibid., p. 613.

[44] Ibid., p. 212.

[45] Ibid., p. 379.

were entirely due to royal favor and their support was generally retained through pensions and army positions. By methods similar to the Guise family, each of these new aristocrats strove to solidify their territory and power, yet they always remained dependent upon Francis I.

Preventing the development of independent sources of power had been a fundamental aim of King Francis. He consistently challenged any group which appeared to be obtaining excessive power within the French court and nobility. In accordance with this policy, Francis unjustly denounced his treasurer Semblancay, accusing him of mismanagement and removing him from his post in 1522.[46] At times the Guise family shared a similar fate, being shifted in and out of power and challenged in turn by other houses, by the king or by the royal mistress. After Pavia, however, Claude's status as the only undefeated French commander became the key to his favor. At any point when France faced military conflict, Guise became indispensable to the monarch. This had been true in 1529 when Claude had been charged with raising 12,000 lansquenets for the

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[46]Martin du Bellay, "Mémoires", Petitot., Vol. XVII, p. 53.

impending Venetian alliance.[47] Yet, it was equally true that during peacetime the diplomatic efforts of the Cardinal de Lorraine were an important element of support for the crown. This had been evident in 1530, when following the Peace of Cambrai, Cardinal Jean was raised to membership in the Conseil des Affaires.[48] The alternate roles of military leader and diplomat were the foundations of the Guise party, as Claude advanced their cause through his wartime activity and the Cardinal retained this favor during the periods of peace.

Throughout the decade from 1530 to 1540, both Guise and Lorraine remained secondary figures in the policy of Anne de Montmorency. It was a fragile policy, built upon the Peace of Cambrai and aimed at developing a coalition of powers to counterbalance, yet coexist with the Empire.

By 1535 Montmorency's plans had been thwarted through English distrust,[49] through the reconciliation

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[47]Carducci to Bartolommeo Gualterotti, March 26, 1529. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. II, p. 1054.

[48]Albert Collignon, Le Mécénat du Cardinal Jean de Lorraine (1498-1550). Publication of Annales de l'Est. Paris, 1910, p. 15.

[49]Marin Giustinian to Venetian Senate, December 1535. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. V, p. 35.

of German Protestants,[50] and finally through the power vacuum created by the death of Milan's Francesco Sforza.[51] With this failure of compromise and coexistence, Montmorency retired from court as the Admiral de Brion and Cardinal de Tournon introduced the politics of aggressive expansion. Such external commitment always worked in favor of the Guise and Lorraine faction, for their position rested upon the combination of a strong army and an active diplomatic intercourse. With the administration openly challenging Charles V, negotiations were begun to obtain French allies. In 1535 the Venetian ambassador reported that the Cardinal de Lorraine had become highly regarded at the French court and was favored for the position of Cardinal Protector, the primary liaison between the monarchy and papacy.[52] At the same time, the imperial ambassador warned that Lorraine's diplomatic efforts reflected the national aspirations of Francis I more closely than the ecclesiastical interests of the papacy.[53]

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[50]This was done through the Diet of Nuremberg (1533) where Charles V promised, "to disturb no one in the practice of his religion until a general council had been called." Henry Lemonnier, Histoire de France depuis les origines jusqu'a la Révolution. Edited by E. Lavisse. Paris, 1903, Vol. V, second part, p. 106.

[51]He died in October, 1535. Ibid., p. 83.

[52]Martin Giustiniano, 1535. Rélations vénitiens, Vol. I, pp. 107 and 49.

[53]Cifuentes to Charles V, 3 March, 1535. Cal. S.P., Henry VIII, Vol. VIII, p. 129.

With their invasion of Picardy in 1536, Brion and Tournon began a three year series of military conflicts. Throughout this warfare, Claude de Guise served as the bulwark of the northeastern frontier, turning back the imperial troops at Perons and raiding the Empire from camps in Champagne and Burgundy.[54]

During this aggressive period, both Guise and Lorraine attained great prominence in their respective fields of warfare and diplomacy. It was these services which brought Francis to support the marriage of their niece, Mary of Lorraine, to the Scotch king, James V.[55] Again, however, Guise success was not isolated, and during this same conflict the Provençal campaigns of Montmorency brought him the title of Constable of France, the supreme commander of the French armies.

Guise, Montmorency and most of the "Renaissance seigneurs" prospered greatly from any policy of military expansion, yet they had little effect upon the ultimate determination of affairs. Throughout his reign, Francis I truly directed the French state and selected its objectives. Whether French policy was aimed at

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[54]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 58.

[55]Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 156.

coexistence or expansion, it was consistently directed against Charles V and intended to undermine his power. It was always Francis who determined the point at which one approach had failed and another was necessary. In short, although his leadership was indirect, the French monarch ruled every aspect of the nation and imposed upon it a unified policy of state.

In his last seven years, from 1540 to 1547, Francis I can be seen governing the nation more directly as he autocratically suppressed any personal or political differences within the court. This period actually began when quarrels between Montmorency and the royal mistress, Madame d'Etampes, brought Francis to demand the Constable's retirement, since ". . . you do not like the one whom I love."[56] Then, faced with a renewal of warfare, it was necessary for Francis to grant 30,000 livres to ensure a loyal French force under Claude de Guise.[57] At the end of this 1542 warfare, Guise too became dispensable and the Cardinal de Lorraine

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[56]Francis I to the Constable de Montmorency, December, 1540. Francis Decrue, Anne de Montmorency, grand maître et connétable de France, à la cour et au conseil du roi François Ier. Paris, 1885, p. 401.

[57]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 74.

was banished to Rome. Gaillard contends that this action was taken when Francis learned of 6,000 écus which Lorraine had received from the Emperor. While the money actually comprised the revenues from the Lorraine archbishopric of Saragosse, the king suspected that it was an imperial pension and immediately accused the Cardinal of betraying France.[58] This incident may have provoked the king's decision, yet his suspicion was probably aroused by the potential threat involved in the whole Guise structure. The family coalition had extended its roots deep into the French army and similarly had penetrated the alliances with Scotland, the Italian and the German states. Even at the end of Francis' reign, the Venetian ambassador reported that the Duke de Guise was the only individual in France with an income of 25,000 écus.[59] Despite the potential threat of all these elements, Claude de Guise remained at court until 1544 and was unaffected by his brother's fall. Then, under the continuing attack of Madame d'Etampes, he was forced from court and rejoined the Cardinal in opposition.

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[58]Gaillard as cited in Forneron, Vol. I, p. 74.

[59]Marin Cavalli to the Venetian Senate, 1547. Armand Baschet, La Diplomatie vénitienne, les princes de l'Europe au XVIe siècle. Paris, 1862, p. 415. Actually according to the account submitted by Jean Belavoye, the Duke's Treasurer-General, Guise income for 1541-1542 had been 104,857 livres tournois. Bouillé, Appendix I, Vol. I, pp. 536-540.

Despite the rigidity of Francis' last years, his reign had brought to France a unified policy and an attempt to resolve the inherent social conflict which had so divided the politics of consolidation and expansion. Francis came to believe that the subjugation of the old nobility was a necessary preliminary to the development of either policy. He realized that the Hapsburg challenge had to be met, yet the independence of the old nobles demonstrated that they would not tolerate becoming merely the military arm of the monarch. To resolve this conflict of interest, he accelerated the already rapid decline of the nobility by fostering a "new aristocracy", his "Renaissance siegneurs". The overall success of this "new monarchy" was summarized by Marin Cavalli, who at the end of Francis' reign reported that:

> For eighty years the French government has continually added to the properties of the crown without alienating anything. . . . The crown makes continual progress in credit and wealth and guarantees itself at the same time against civil wars. The princes, being poor, can do nothing to oppose the King. . . . If anyone through a rash decision chooses to resist, as was done for example by the Prince de Bourbon, that one furnishes the king with the occasion to enrich himself even more from the prince's ruin.[60]

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[60]Marin Cavalli to the Venetian Senate, 1547. Armand Baschet, op. cit., pp. 414-415. "Depuis quatre-vingts ans, le gouvernement de France ajoute toujours aux propriétés de la couronne sans rien aliéner. . . .

Upon the destruction of these great nobles, Francis built his "new aristocracy", distributing to them the wealth acquired from the great lords. It was this new supporting class of "Renaissance seigneurs" which provided the structure for the genesis of the Guise faction in France.

La couronne fait des progrès continuels en crédit et en richesse, et elle se garantit en même temps contre les guerres civiles. Les princes étant pauvres, ne pouvent rien oser contre le Roi. . . . Si quelqu'un par un mouvement irréflechi, se hasardait à irrésister, comme le fit par example le prince de Bourbon, celui-là fournirait simplement au Roi l'occasion de s'enrichir encore plus par sa ruine."

CHAPTER II

DIVISION WITHIN THE "NEW ARISTOCRACY": GUISE AND MONTMORENCY

The early years of Henry II's rule witnessed the evolution of two distinct factions within the French court. During this period, both the Guise and Montmorency families developed opposing elements of support and opposing policies of state. The power of this new aristocracy had been conferred by Francis I, yet he had left his son unprepared to cope with the extensive influence of these "Renaissance seigneurs". The powerful factions had been expelled from Francis' court, yet their complete destruction was seldom sought. In retaining absolute supremacy, Francis had ignored the training of his successor and had alienated Henry by favoring his other sons. Francis' concessions in the Treaty of Crépy had been regarded by the Dauphin as nothing more than an attempt at channeling his inheritance toward a more favored son.[1] To counteract this paternal autocracy, Henry had become the center of a court-in-exile, and reunited those advisors who had fallen from royal power. Thus, the inexperienced Dauphin soon came

[1]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, pp. 7 and 8.

to be dominated by the "new aristocracy", with the Guise and Montmorency families becoming his principal supporters. The unity among these advisors stemmed only from a common opposition to the personality and policies of Francis I and following his death in March of 1547, the diametrically opposed views of Guise and Montmorency began to solidify.

Foreign diplomats waited anxiously to see which family would emerge as the power behind Henry's throne. By the first of April, 1547, the English representative, Doctor Wotton, reported significantly that Montmorency had been summoned to the court.[2] The Constable thus reoccupied his primary position in the Conseil d'Affairs with Francis' favorite, the Admiral d'Annebaut, being dismissed. At the same time, Henry awarded Cardinal Tournon's council seat to the young comte d'Aumale, the son of Claude de Guise. By these appointments Henry served notice that his entire court-in-exile would be represented, complete with all its factions and internal contradictions.

To make way for his appointees, Henry undertook the complete routing of his father's ministers.

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[2]Doctor Wotton to the Council, 1 April 1547. Cal. S.P., Edward VI, p. 10.

Throughout April, ambassadorial dispatches contain detailed accounts of the purges effected against the partisans of Admiral d'Annebaut and Madame d'Etempes.[3] Finally, the confiscated holdings were redistributed among Henry's favorites with Montmorency receiving the chateau of Madame d'Etampes and arrears of 100,000 écus on his charges of Constable and Grand Master.[4] The future Marshal de Saint-André received the estate of Vallery as well as the forest lands of Orléans.[5] The Guise family also benefited from Henry's patronage, as Francis d'Aumale was created Governor of Dauphiny and his brother Charles de Lorraine assumed the office of judicial chief for the Conseil d'Affaires.[6] As Archbishop of Reims, Charles also received the titles of Chancelier of the Order and Master of the King's Chapel along with the estates of Dampierre and Mandon.[7] The Venetian ambassador reported that Henry had climaxed these gifts by alternately granting the 800,000 francs

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[3]Lord Cobham to the Lord Protector, 18 April 1547. Cal. S.P., Edward VI, p. 131.

[4]Claude de l'Aubespine, "Histoire particulière de la cour de Henri II," printed in Cimber et Danjou, Vol. III, p. 283.

[5]Ibid., Vol. III, p. 283.

[6]St. Mauris to Granvelle, April 1547. Cal. S.P., Spanish, Vol. IV, p. 74.

[7]l'Aubespine, op. cit., p. 285.

from the clerical decimes to Montmorency, Saint-André and the Duke de Guise.[8] After the first two months of Henry's reign, the French administration had altered so radically that the imperial ambassador noted:

> . . . this court is a new world and nothing that has been done by Tris (Tournon) and the Admiral either with the English, the Protestants or others is now approved of.[9]

Thus while the Constable received the primary offices at the new court, the interests of the Guise faction were fully recognized in the initial distribution of patronage.

The polarization of power within the new court emerged slowly, yet diverging goals were immediately noticeable upon such issues as policy decisions and appointments. By the beginning of the summer Montmorency had more firmly placed his stamp upon the administration. Through his position as Constable, Montmorency utilized the military to extend his influence and reinforce his government. Generally he depended upon the services of the Duke de Nivernois in Champagne, d'Humières and his son in Péronne, Coligny in Picardy and Rochepôt in Languedoc.[10] Within the court administration,

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[8]Lorenzo Contarini to the Venetian Senate, 1550. Printed in Armand Baschet, La Diplomatie vénitienne, les princes de l'Europe au XVI^e siècle. Paris, 1862, pp. 435-436.

[9]St. Mauris to Granvelle, April 1547. Cal. S.P., Spanish, Vol. IX, p. 75.

[10]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency, connétable et pair de France sous les rois Henri II, François II et Charles IX. Paris, 1889, pp. 36-37.

Montmorency control became equally obvious when he appointed the new secretaries of the Conseil d'Affaires, the posts through which conciliar decisions were formulated and expedited. Being head of this council, Montmorency freely named his favorites Côme Clausse, as secretary for Spain and Portugal and Jean Duthier, as the official in charge of Roman affairs.[11] The Constable then sent his ally M. de Giê to replace the ambassador to Rome, dispatching another friend, Jean de Mervillier, to the official post at Venice.[12]

In these Italian appointments, the Constable had struck directly at the offices which the Guise faction had hoped to control. From early in the reign of Francis I the external Guise structure had been based upon its close ties with the papal court and the Italian principalities. Now Montmorency's claim to these offices made it clear that he had no intention of sharing power. Claude de l'Aubespine, one of the council secretaries, noted that the Constable left no authority to the Guise partisans, but proceeded to consolidate his own control over the arms, deliberations and negotiations of the kingdom.[13]

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[11]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 41.

[12]Ibid.

[13]l'Aubespine, op. cit., p. 283.

Despite these Montmorency initiatives, the personal position of the Guise family was not directly threatened. They had survived the loss of favor under Francis I and had retained positions of independent strength through their governorships in Burgundy, Champagne, Savoy and Dauphiny, as well as their military offices of General of the Galleys and Commander of the Cavalry.[14] The genesis of Guise strength lay in monarchial favoritism, yet by 1547, the family was reinforced through its external connections with the church hierarchy, the Italian and German states and with Scotland. Under Henry II, direction of the Guise faction had passed to the sons of the Duke de Guise, Francis d'Aumale and Archbishop Charles de Reims. Thus, as Duke Claude and Cardinal Jean observed the court from retirement, their successors brought a new and youthful vigor to Guise policy.

Initially the Guise family did not directly challenge the Montmorency appointments, but questioned the greater goals toward which they were directed. It was the Constable's aversion to external expansion which provided the basis for Guise opposition. After his

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[14]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 100.

reluctant attempt to build an Italian league in June of 1547, Montmorency had returned France to isolation. Francis Decrue explained this policy as based upon the Constable's rigidly hierarchical conception of society. Order remained Montmorency's supreme goal and he opposed expansion as necessarily detracting from internal stability.[15] Yet, on a more practical level, Montmorency rule was totally dependent upon the maintenance of peace and stability. The Constable exercised his power through the bureaucratic collége militaire of the marshals and through the administrative framework of the baillis and sénéchaux.[16] These structures, both military and civil, were in equally early stages of development and their proper functioning required absolute stability. Roger Doucet and Ferdinand Lot have demonstrated that in times of war or disorder, the whole military bureaucracy would collapse and revert to regional control.[17] Similarly, the provincial governors used war as an excuse to

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[15]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency . . . suus les rois Henri II . . ., op. cit., p. 38.

[16]In this case the central bureaucratic administration should be interpreted in the wide sense which Gaston Zeller proposes, with the monarchial representatives being the baillis, sénéchaux, prévôts, viguiers and châtelains. Gaston Zeller, "L'Administration monarchique avant les Intendants," RH, 197 (1947), pp. 184-185.

[17]Roger Doucet, Les institutions de la France au XVIe siècle. Paris, 1948, Vol. I, pp. 113-114. This bureaucratic collège militaire was formed by the edict of

restrict the central control exercised through the baillis and sénéchaux, thus localizing the whole administration.[18] With his power so largely dependent upon centralized authority, Montmorency cautiously avoided foreign commitments and concentrated upon retaining control of France. The Florentine ambassador summarized this new French policy toward the middle of July, contending that it was designed merely to gain time and maintain the status quo while awaiting the death of Charles V.[19]

At a time when the Emperor's Muhlberg victory seemed to have crushed all internal German opposition, the Guise faction particularly opposed the Constable's isolationist policy. They argued that allowing imperial consolidation would only jeopardize the French position, and they encouraged Henry to actively challenge Charles' centralization of the Empire. By August of 1547, this division within the French court had become public knowledge, as the imperial ambassador reported that

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26 June 1947 and consisted of constable and marchals, united as "membres joints et unis faisant un collége sous un même chef, qui est le connétable." Also see Ferdinand Lot, Recherches sur les effectifs des Armées Françaises des Guerres d'Italie aux Guerres de Religion. Paris, 1962, p. 147.

[18]Gustave Dupont-Ferrier, Les Officiers Royaux des bailliages et sénéchaussées et les institutions monarchiques locales en France à la fin du Moyen age. Paris, 1902, pp. 242-245.

[19]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 18 July, 1547. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 199.

although the Constable remained all-powerful, his position was being challenged by the Guise supporters.[20]

Encouragement for an aggressive policy was most vigorous from the "Renaissance seigneurs" and army commanders.[21] Most of these men, including Pierre Strozzi, Blaise de Montluc and the Marshal de Saint-André had personally profited from the Italian warfare of the past reign. The Guise family, with its basis in the army and its interests in Italy, had slowly evolved as the representative and spokesman for a continuation of this expansion. Throughout the summer of 1547 the Constable had consolidated his control and resisted the demands for defensive measures in Italy. Then, the September assassination of Pierre-Luigi Farnese threatened the delicate Italian balance, and the issue of war or peace was taken from the Constable's hands. This murder left Parma-Plaissance without a ruler and created a power vacuum in the center of Italy, a power vacuum which invited Imperial expansion. Within their own framework, the Guise faction determined that they would bring France to defy any Imperial attempt upon Parma. To that end, Charles, having become Cardinal de

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[20]St. Mauris to Prince Philip, 10 August 1547. Cal. S.P., Spanish, Vol. IX, p. 131.

[21]Romier, Orign. Polit., Vol. I, p. 49.

Guise in late July,[22] undertook a tour of Italy seeking support for French intervention. The imperial ambassador, Saint-Mauris, wrote that the purpose of this trip to Rome and Venice was to negotiate the formation of a strong French alliance.[23] A dispatch from the Venetian Ambassador, Giustiniani, noted that on the twenty-second day of September, Cardinal Charles de Guise left France with eighty attendants and 30,000 écus, "to distribute liberally".[24] In this way the Guise faction began its independent opposition to Montmorency isolation.

Charles V had actually marched into Plaissance upon the death of Franese and had increased French fears of an imperial conquest of the whole duchy. The Florentine ambassador, Ricasoli, reported this apprehension at the beginning of October 1547, claiming that:

> . . . the court of France has been sadly afflicted by the killing at Plaissance of Pierre-Luigi Farnese and the Spanish

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[22]Francis Decrue contends that it was Henry II who pressed for this appointment. Anne duc de Montmorency . . . sous les rois Henri II . . ., op. cit., pp. 18-19. Also see Michel Francino to the Duke de Ferrara, 27 July 1547. Cited in Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 54.

[23]St. Mauris to Prince Philip, 10 October 1547. Cal. S.P., Spanish, Vol. IX, p. 174.

[24]Francesco Giustiniani to the Venetian Senate, 2 October 1547. Cited in Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 43.

> occupation of the city. The French are making proposals to the Pope asking for the city in order to buttress the ever-increasing Imperial preponderance in Italy . . .[25]

This attitude united the Marshal Saint-André, Pierre Strozzi and Henry's mistress, Diane de Poitiers, in strong encouragement for the Guise negotiations. Ricasoli noted the continuation of Charles' diplomacy throughout December 1547, simultaneously mentioning the increasing bitterness of the Constable.[26] The climax to this struggle came at the end of January 1548, when the Cardinal de Guise concluded a defensive pact with Hippolyte d'Este, the Cardinal de Ferrara, and later reached a verbal understanding with the papacy.[27]

With Montmorency so intent upon solidifying his power and policies, he opposed in every way the projected realignment of France. This opposition brought him to the point of attempting to banish the Guise faction from court. This conspiracy was begun shortly

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[25]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 1 October 1547. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 209.

[26]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, December 1547 and 9-12 January 1548. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, pp. 214 and 220.

[27]Gustave B. de Puchesse, "Négociations de Henri II avec le duc de Ferrare d'auprès des Documents Inédits (1555-1557)," Revue des Questions Historiques, 5 (1868), p. 493. Also see Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 13 February 1548. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 228.

after the departure of Cardinal Charles, when Montmorency demanded that Francis d'Aumale should inspect the fortifications of his Dauphiny governorship. Francis had eventually averted this, using every possible excuse,[28] then as the probability of a new alliance became greater, the Constable dispatched a letter bearing Henry's signature and ordering Cardinal Charles to remain in Rome.[29] This final attempt to block Guise policy was defeated as Charles sent Diane de Poitiers and Francis d'Aumale to demand a royal explanation of the order. These Montmorency efforts, even in failure, indicate the Constable's desperation and fear at losing control of French diplomacy.

In his February 1548 dispatches, Ricasoli reported to Cosimo that the position of Montmorency was steadily deteriorating within the French court.[30] This decline continued throughout March and April, as Henry II became more determined in following the expansion policy, or at least in protecting Parma. By late February, the King had ordered 300,000 écus to be dispatched to Venice

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[28]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 9-12 January 1548. Nég. Dipl. Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 220.

[29]Ibid., p. 220. Also see Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 29.

[30]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 23 February 1548. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 228.

and placed at the disposal of the Pope.[31] Then on May first, Franco-Italian ties were again strengthened, as the final dowry conditions were arranged for the marriage of Francis d'Aumale and Anne d'Este, the eldest daughter of the Duke of Ferrara. Henry used their August wedding as a pretext for visiting Italy and conferring with Ferrara on arrangements for an Italian league.[32] The king returned to France seemingly committed to a program of Italian alliance, as Saint-Mauris reported that Henry was making every effort to obtain new funds.[33] Thus, by late 1548, Guise politics had apparently succeeded in inaugurating an aggressive external policy, despite the opposition of the Montmorency court.

Henry's mistress, Diane de Poitiers, had been a major factor in persuading the king to support an Italian commitment. Her association with the Guise family had begun in 1547, when her daughter, Louise de Bézé, had married the third son of Claude de Guise, the Marquis de Mayenne. Diane had continued a close

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[31]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 16-21 April 1548. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 231.

[32]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, pp. 63-68.

[33]St. Mauris to the Emperor, 26 October 1548. Cal. S.P., Spanish, Vol. IX, p. 302.

relationship with the Guise family, seeking their support to check the Constable's power and allow for more of her own influence in court affairs.[34] This liason with the king's mistress was equally desirable in executing Guise policy, and Claude de l'Aubespine contended that Cardinal Charles was particularly successful in influencing Henry through Diane de Poitiers.[35] Her titles and pensions bear witness to Diane's mastery over Henry II, for upon his accession to the crown she had been created Duchesse de Valintinois. Shortly thereafter, Diane was granted all the revenues accumulated in the "Confirmation of Offices", the payments by which government officials sought to retain their posts under a new monarch.[36]

These rewards had given Diane a certain official position within the administration, yet her personal relationship with the monarch remained the most effective element in countermanding Montmorency policy.

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[34]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency . . . sous les rois Henri II . . ., op. cit., pp. 15-18.

[35]l'Aubespine, op. cit., p. 281.

[36]Pierre Bourdeillas abbé et seigneur de Branthôme, "Les Vies des Grands Capitaines de siècle dernier," Oeuvres complètes de Branthôme. Paris, 1875, Vol. IV, first book, second part, p. 78.

By 1548 the Constable had determined that Henry's mistress was primarily responsible for promoting the Italian realignment. Deciding that it would be necessary to remove Diane from power, Montmorency sought to attach Henry II to a new mistress. Lady Flemming, a Scotch governess to Mary Stuart, was induced to meet the king several times toward the end of 1559. The exact dates of this affair are difficult to determine, but its resulting bitterness was immediately evident. The Venetian ambassador, Lorenzo Contarini, summarized this tension in an early 1551 report, noting that:

> This hostility had already existed for three years, but it only broke out openly last year when Madame la Duchesse learned that the Constable had tried to turn the King from the passion which he had for her, in making him develop a love for the governess of the small queen of Scotland.[37]

The personal power of the Duchesse de Valintinois was effectively reasserted as she persuaded Henry to banish the Lady Flemming, who was then

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[37]Lorenzo Contarini to the Venetian Senate, 1551. Printed in Armand Baschet, La Diplomatie vénitienne, les princes de l'Europe au XVIe siècle. Paris, 1862, p. 440. "Cette hostilité compte déjà trois années, mais elle n'éclata ouvertement que l'année dernière lorsque madame la Duchesse s'aperqut que le Connétable avait tramé de detourner le Roi de la passion qu'il avait pour elle, en le faisant s'éprendre d'amour pour la gouvernante de la petite Reine d'Ecosse."

pregnant. The affair appears to have ended toward the middle of 1550, since the English ambassador reported in April of 1551, that the Lady Flemming had given birth to a son in Scotland.[38] It was this incident, and its incumbent animosity, which finally brought the official split in the French court.[39] After 1550, all issues were determined on the basis of support for either the Constable de Montmorency or the Guise faction.

Branthôme noted the emergence of this new Guise faction, remarking that it was based upon the co-operation of the Duchesse and Cardinal Charles.[40] During that same year, 1550, the internal strength of the new coalition had been increased by the deaths of Cardinal Jean and Duke Claude. With their passing, the younger members of the House of Guise assumed a direct control of the family titles, offices and pensions. Having become Duke de Guise, Francis inherited the eastern power base of Burgundy and Champagne, the traditional family governorships. As Cardinal de Lorraine, Charles

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[38]John Masone to the Council, 29 April 1551. Cal. S.P., Edward VI, p. 97.

[39]Lorenzo Contarini to the Venetian Senate, 1551. Printed in Armand Baschet, op. cit., p. 441. Also see John Masone to the Council, 14 September 1550. Cal. S.P., Edward VI, p. 55.

[40]Branthôme, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

received titles to six archbishoprics, twelve bishoprics, and twenty abbeys.[41] The family income, managed by the Cardinal, had risen by 1550 to around 300,000 livres tournois.[42] From this position of administrative and financial strength the Guise faction moved to acquire complete control of the French administration.

Their advances against Montmorency policy were most defined in two areas, the military and the diplomatic. Within this framework of opposition, their policy rallied internal support and for the first time their supporters developed into a comprehensive political faction.

Popular support for Guise expansionism was derived primarily from the lesser nobles. Being excluded from commerce, this large class could retain its noble status only by acquiring some form of income or office. To this end, military service in the company of a great commander became one of the most common means by which a family could arrest its economic decline.[43] Even the royal armies, paid through royal

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[41]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency . . . sous les rois Henri II . . ., op. cit., p. 33.

[42]l'Aubespine, op. cit., p. 281.

[43]J. R. Major, The Estates General of 1560. Princeton, New Jersey, 1951, p. 18. Also see Edouard Perroy, "Social mobility among the French Noblesse in the Later Middle Ages," Past and Present, 21 (April 1964), p. 30.

taxes, were outfitted in the personal livery of their commanders.[44] The whole military structure was based upon this local leader who in most cases was a member of the new aristocracy, a "Renaissance seigneur" created by Francis I. Throughout the provinces it was these commanders who controlled both the military and administrative positions, using them to encourage and reward their partisans. Guise personally used his governorships in Burgundy and Champagne to create a large body of these followers. Other nobles employed similar techniques, as can be seen with the Duke de Nevers in Nievers, La Trêmoilies in Poitou, the Bourbons in Navarre and the Duke de Mayenne as Lieutenant-general in Burgundy.[45] Naturally, the clients of these great houses were most prosperous during periods of military activity when the number of offices and financial expenditures were considerably increased. It was this group which formed a vested interest in warfare, and it was to this group that the Duke de Guise appealed, both as a military commander and as an effective courtier.

The Guise diplomatic connections were the link enabling them both to formulate a comprehensive

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[44]J. R. Major, "The Crown and the Aristocracy in Renaissance France," AHR, 69 (April 1964), p. 640.

[45]Ibid., pp. 638-639.

expansionist policy and to obtain foreign pressure in support of that policy. Their external position was founded upon alliances with leaders in Scotland and the German states, but the key to Guise power had been their status in Italy. Their ties with the papal court, the Duke de Ferrara and the Florentine exiles had made the Guise family invaluable during the many years of Italian campaigning. These advantageous alliances were maintained through a series of Guise envoys, stationed in the major courts of the peninsula. While Montmorency had claimed the official Italian posts for his partisans, one of the Guise allies, Robert de Lenoncourt, was representing their interests at the papal court as early as August of 1547.[46] Within Rome, negotiations for the family were generally conducted through Cardinal Hippolyte d'Este,[47] and in Ferrara they were represented by the Bishop de Lodève.[48] Additional Guise partisans were dispatched into Italy for such special missions as Jean de Montluc's

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[46]Robert de Lenoncourt to the Duke d'Aumale, 27 August 1547. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 1. Also see Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, p. 286.

[47]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 107.

[48]Gustave B. de Puchesse, "Négociations de Henri II . . .," op. cit., p. 491. Lodève was an official French agent, but Morvillier in his mémoires accused the bishop of being in the pay of the Guise family.

arrangements for the meeting of the king and Ferrara, or Pierre Strozzi's preparations for the defense of Parma.[49] With such a diplomatic network established, the Guise family worked around the Constable's discrimination in selecting ambassadors. Yet, it became a primary object of Guise policy to seek the replacement of Montmorency's friends with their own envoys and thus to impose their foreign policy upon the French court.

While relations with Scotland and the German states were not an integral part of this Guise power complex, they were important in the determination of French politics. Since the death of James V, Scotland had been ruled by the Dowager Queen Mary of Lorraine, the sister of Francis de Guise. A French-oriented Scotland had been so important to Francis I that he took Mary under his protection sending troops to her aid following the death of James V.[50] The position of the Scotch kingdom, with its borders adjoining England, made it a useful means of influencing the English monarchs. Yet Scottish relations assumed importance only

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[49]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, pp. 59 and 207.

[50]Sallie S. Sypher, Mary of Lorraine and the end of the Old Alliance. Unpublished Doctoral thesis, Cornell University, Ithica, New York, 1965, pp. 1-2 and 35.

in times of an Anglo-French crisis and even during the English invasions of 1548, both Montmorency and Guise complained of the large expenditures involved in Mary's defensive operations.[51]

The western German states were another area of Guise influence. There, the ecclesiastical positions of the Cardinal de Lorraine were of strategic importance as contacts with the German principalities. In Toul, the Lorraine agent Toussaint d'Hocédy had been established as bishop in 1549,[52] then in 1550 Lorraine had selected Robert de Lenoncourt to become his successor in the bishopric of Metz.[53] These seats and the family connections in Lorraine enabled Cardinal Charles to remain fully informed concerning affairs within the Empire.[54] His information was vital to French strategy as it usually sought out any sign of dissension among the imperial princes.

Thus by 1550, there existed two distinct systems of administration pursuing two contradictory

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[51]Mary of Lorraine to the Duke d'Aumale, April 1550. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 33.

[52]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency . . . sous les rois Henri II . . ., op. cit., p. 117.

[53]Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, pp. 285-287.

[54]Cardinal de Lorraine to Francis d'Aumale, 30 November 1549. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 18.

policies, both presuming to speak for France. The Montmorency faction had initially obtained control of the structure of the state, but had proceeded to alienate many of the vital interest groups within the kingdom. It was these elements which had united behind the Guise family, with the object of reversing Montmorency policy. This Guise coalition, with its internal and external connections, served as the perfect vehicle for mobilizing the discontented interests. By 1550 the Guise and Montmorency factions had evolved to a position of equilibrium, a position from which each began desperate attempts to obtain the favor of Henry II.

CHAPTER III

A DECADE OF FACTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE ALTERATIONS IN FRENCH POLICY

For nine years after the political divisions of 1550, the French court gravitated toward either the Guise or Montmorency positions and Henry II was caught up in the wake of these political alterations. Both factions were capable of influencing royal decisions and each had crystalized its support around opposing policies of state. Montmorency's strength lay in the centralized civil and military offices of the kingdom, yet his control of this structure was entirely contingent upon the preservation of peace. In direct contrast, the Guise faction had combined the dissident elements of the military command and the "new aristocracy", the very elements whose independence was threatened by Montmorency consolidation, and the very elements whose prosperity depended upon a continuation of warfare. Thus the dichotomy persisted, as the centralized approach of Montmorency again clashed with the independent designs of the "new nobility".

From 1547 to 1550, the king's decisions had been shaped by Montmorency, and French policy had been

oriented toward the Constable's peaceful goals. Only the English invasions of Scotland in 1548 and 1549 were sufficiently serious to bring French intervention and there the aid followed upon two years of desperate appeals by the Dowager Queen, Mary of Lorraine.[1] But, even this intervention was rationalized in terms of the Montmorency policy, as Henry argued that an independent Scotland was essential to protect the French ports and harbors and to defend the French nation itself.[2] Having thus provided Scotland with a small French force of 6,000 men, the Constable remained opposed to any further commitment on the island. His views are reflected in the dispatch from his Roman ambassador, Morvilliers, where it was argued that any increase in the Scottish conflict would seriously jeopardize French fortunes in Italy.[3]

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[1]Mary of Lorraine to Alexander Gordan, 14 April 1548. Relations politiques de la France et de l'Espagne avec l'Ecosse au XVIe siècle. Published by Alexandre Teulet. Paris, 1862, Vol. I, p. 163.

[2]Order of Henry II, 31 December 1549. Ibid., p. 235. ". . . pour occuper la mer aux Anglais, à la deffense et conservation du royaume d'Ecosse en l'obéissance de nostre filz le Dauphin de Viennois, et aussi pour tenir nos ports et hâvres en seureté, et faire escorte et seur convoy aux navires marchans de notre royaume. . . ."

[3]Morvilliers to Henry II, 3-28 June 1549. Négociations de la France dans le Levant, ou correspondances, Mémoires et Actes Diplomatiques des

By 1550, the Guise faction had obtained control of royal policy and had begun to reverse the pacific attitude of the French court. Their primary diplomatic objective had always been the Italian ambassadorial posts, which were so tightly controlled by Montmorency favorites. Thus, in March of 1549, with Montmorency control waning, they had obtained the removal of the Cardinal Protector, Jean du Bellay.[4] By April, the Cardinal of Ferrara arrived as the new French representative at the papal court, and from this post he became the key to all Guise relations within the Italian peninsula.[5]

Henry II, while unconcerned with the mechanics of French policy, was determined that neither his kingdom, nor its influence should be depleted during his rule. This had been the motivating force behind French action in Scotland and had brought the monarch to insist upon papal confirmation of Farnese rights in the vacant duchy of Parma. Octave Farnese was a

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Ambassadeurs de France à Constantinople et des Ambassadeurs, Envoyés ou Residents à divers Titres. . . . Published by E. Charrière. Paris, 1850, Vol. II, p. 100.

[4]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, pp. 209-211.

[5]Cardinal Farnese to _____, March 1554. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 254.

traditional Italian ally of the French monarchy and through him, Henry hoped to counterbalance the Italian power of the Empire. Julius III granted the king's demands in February of 1550, yet by October Henry was again confronted by imperial intrigue, as Charles V and Pope Julius negotiated a Farnese indemnity allowing both Parma and Plaissance to be united under the Emperor. Directed by Guise policy, Henry II reacted violently against this papal treachery and war was declared upon Julius in March. The king then sought further action as he gathered his exiled Italian advisors and by April of 1551, he commissioned Pierre Strozzi to prepare troops for the defense of Parma.[6] French preparations continued through May, and on the twenty-seventh, a Franco-Farnese treaty was concluded specifying Henry II as the personal protector of the House of Farnese and guaranteeing Octave with 2,000 soldiers, 200 cavalrymen and an annual subsidy of 2,000 écus d'or.[7] Julius replied to the treaty by declaring Octave a rebel, proceeding to invalidate the Farnese

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[6]Babbi to the Duke of Florence, 25 May 1551. Cited in Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 238.

[7]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 242.

claims upon Parma and ordering the imperial commander, Ferrante Gonzaga, to occupy the disputed duchy.[8] Thus, by the middle of 1551, Guise politics had forced a direct confrontation between French and imperial forces, and their plans appeared inevitably converging toward a resumption of Italian warfare.

Yet, just as war was about to explode in Italy, France concluded peace and undertook a northern campaign in league with the German Protestant princes. Lucien Romier has contended that Montmorency arranged the northern diversion to curb the Guise impetus toward Italian warfare. This theory is based upon Romier's religious argument that the Protestant alliance signified a defeat for the Guise ultramontagne party.[9] Gaston Zeller and H. O. Evennett have discounted this Romier thesis, arguing that the Guise were primarily a political faction, and a faction which remained supreme despite the policy alteration.[10] In fact, it appears that the Guise position was changed in late 1551, in reaction to the precarious Italian situation described by Ambassador de Selve. In August of 1551, de Selve reported from Venice that Italian leaders were unconcerned

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., pp. 280-286.

[10] Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, p. 116. Also see H. O. Evennett, The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Council of Trent. Cambridge, 1930, pp. 123-124.

over the state of Parma and even questioned the motives behind the whole French involvement in Italy.[11] Then later the same month, he reported to the French representative in Constantinople that both monarchs had collected large armies around Parma and la Mirandola, and that the conflict promised to be exceedingly long and very costly.[12] Thus, it appears that the Guise faction may have been turned from Italy by the lack of substantial Italian support and the remote prospect of any immediate victory.

With the Parma struggle continuing, and new Italian initiatives being planned, an undercurrent of German interest becomes evident in the Guise correspondence of 1550 and 1551. In February of 1550, following the Imperial Diet, Ambassador Marillac reported to the Duke de Guise that it would be almost impossible for the Emperor to unite his splintered German nobles.[13] During the summer of 1551, while

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[11]de Selve to Henry II, 10 August 1551. Négociations de la France dans le Levant . . ., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 150. "Sire, je suis toujours à représenter à ces sieurs que en toute la deffense on perte de Parme l'on ne scauroit dire qu'il y eust conséquence ou intérest à V.M., pour la Picardie ne pour la Provence ou le Languedoc, ne pour le Piedmont, ne la Savoye ou aultres parties de vostre royaume. . . ."

[12]de Selve to Secretary Phébus, August 1551. Ibid., p. 150.

[13]Marillac to the Duke de Guise, 23 February 1551. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 26.

Charles V worked to resolve his internal problems, the Duke de Guise was corresponding with the English Privy Council concerning the joint Anglo-French initiatives being planned against the Emperor.[14] Within Germany, the nobles became increasingly splintered as the traditional constitutional threat was complicated by the religious challenge of the Council of Trent.

The Diet of 1550 had given rise to a neucleus of dissident Protestant princes who had gathered their allies at Konigsberg in February of 1550. This new anti-imperial coalition was under the leadership of Duke Maurice of Saxony, Margrave Jean of Brandenburg, Duke Albert of Prussia and Duke Jean-Albert of Mecklenburg.[15] Their goals were strictly defensive, as they aimed to prevent any alteration in the political or religious structure of the Empire.[16] Their initial opposition had been political, but the arrest of the Langrave of Hesse finally drove them to plan military action as they sought the support of France, England and

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[14]Marillac to Henry II, 30 June 1551. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 58. Also Sir Anthony Guidotti to Earl of Warwick, 30 August 1551. Cal. S.P., Edward, p. 164.

[15]Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, p. 163.

[16]Ibid., Vol. I, p. 127.

Poland. At Lochan these rebellious leaders established an alliance of princes, specifying the vague and implied goals which dictated their unity and determined their policy. The resulting document noted their opposition to the "beastial servitude" to which Charles had reduced their "dear fatherland", and asserted their principal objective of freeing the Langrave of Hesse.[17] There were no articles of alliance with respect to the French nation, yet the princes considered Henry II as one of their number, and it was noted that, "it was acceptible" for him to occupy Metz, Toul and Verdun as the "Imperial Vicar".[18] In military matters, Maurice of Saxony was to direct the coalition army, yet the treaty indicated that, "if it were necessary, we would join our army with that of the king, as similarly we would hope that the king would join us if it became necessary".[19] Thus, for France, and for the Guise the door to German conquest had been opened precisely when the prospects for the success

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[17] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 164. Also see de Selve to Montmorency, 15 March 1552. Négociations de la France dans le Levant . . ., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 185. This dispatch notes that Maurice's aims were: (1) "délivrance du langrave", (2) "que ses docteurs qu'il [Charles V] envoieroit au concile [Trent] eussent veuz décisifs de pareille authorité que les prelatz et ministres du pape. . . ."

[18] Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, p. 165.

[19] Ibid., p. 166.

of the Italian campaign had become increasingly uncertain.

On the first day of August, 1551, Henry had dispatched an urgent message soliciting Guise advice on the possible reorientation of French policy.[20] Then, by January of 1552, Ambassador de Selve reported that there appeared to be significant progress in the peace negotiations of Cardinal Tournon and Pope Julius.[21] The French decision to concentrate upon Germany was evident by the twentieth of April, as the pope ordered Ferrante Gonzaga to withdraw from Parma. By the end of the month, the decision was implemented as Julius III and Tournon signed a two year suspension of arms and France was freed to pursue the German campaign.

Perhaps Romier's concentration upon Italian politics convinced him that the Parma withdrawal entailed a rejection of Guise policy,[22] yet this interpretation overlooks the expansionism which persisted within the French court. While Italy remained the foundation of Guise interests, their opportunism would never have permitted the rejection of an offer as

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[20]Montmorency to the Duke de Guise, 1 August 1551. Guise, "Mémoires", p. 68.

[21]de Selve to Montmorency, 8 January 1552. Négociations de la France dans le Levant. . ., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 173.

[22]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, pp. 284-285.

favorable as the German alliance. Their diplomacy and advice are evident throughout the period leading to the German campaign. Thus, it appears that their policy went unhindered in 1552, merely altering its objectives from Italy to Germany.

By October of 1551, Henry II had gathered his council at Fontainbleau, seeking to establish the terms of the German alliance. Acceptance of the pact was proposed by the Constable and Marshal de Vieilleville, with the Guise leaders offering no objections.[23] Then, as commander-in-chief, Montmorency supervised the collection of around 80,000 troops, massing them along the northeastern frontier in the areas of Vitry-le-François, Ligny-en-Barrois and Attigny sur l'Aisne.[24] To finance the preparations for this campaign, Henry resorted to increased impôts, higher demands upon the cities, and outright loans of 945,000 écus.[25] By early

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[23]Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 253.

[24]Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, pp. 324-328.

[25]Henri Hauser, "The European Financial Crisis of 1559," Journal of Economic and Business History, 2 (February, 1930), p. 247. The Imperial Ambassador reported the contributions of the Lucca bankers at 120,000 écus and placed the Florentine loan at 125,000 écus. He contended that France owed the Italian bankers over two million in gold at that point, yet he was unaware that Henry had secretly obtained 700,000 écus from the German financeers. The total German and Italian figures indicate the massive debt which France was accumulating.

January, the initial military operations were underway and by the fifteenth, the king crossed into the Empire, signing the formal alliance at Chambord. His financial contributions for the first three months were assessed at 240,000 écus, payable before the end of February, thereafter, Henry was to be taxed 70,000 écus monthly.[26] With the formalities completed, the "voyage d'Allemagne" was underway by the middle of March.

The German forces, under the Elector of Saxony, captured Augsburg by the fourth of April and pressed on to Ulm. The French troops had been regrouped at the end of March, then by the fifth of April, Montmorency led their advance guard in the capture of Toul. Metz was invested the next day, but resisted since it had been impossible to intimidate the independent Messin inhabitants of the city. On the basis of this Messin attitude, Gaston Zeller has discounted the traditional contention that the Guise family had subverted the city of Metz by appointing their ally, Cardinal Lenoncourt, as its bishop. Instead, Zeller argued that Lenoncourt concentrated upon winning the confidence of his flock and had vehemently resisted

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[26]Zeller, Metz, Vol. I, p. 163.

French plans to capture Metz.[27] Despite its determination, the Metz resistence lasted only four days and the whole campaign lasted only six weeks, yet in that period of time France had attained its goals, and the northeastern border area had been secured for Henry II.

Charles V had been helpless during the spring campaign of 1552, and the alliance of the French king and German princes had exposed the full vulnerability of the imperial position. It took the French invasion to restore German unity and bring the Emperor's acceptance of the opposition demands.[28] By the end of March, Henry had alienated his German allies by directing French forces onward into Germany, leading them toward the city of Strassburg. Although the French were rebuffed by the outer defenses of the city, this unauthorized advance had aroused German resentment. Thus, by the middle of June, Henry was notified that the Emperor had accepted the full demands of the Protestant princes.[29] The implications of this new German unity

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[27] Ibid., pp. 311-314.

[28] de Selve to Henry II, 25 and 31 March 1552. Négociations de la France dans le Levent . . ., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 186.

[29] de Selve to Henry II, 19 and 23 June 1552. Ibid., p. 208.

were evident during the summer of 1552, as Charles began efforts to raise 120,000 troops, promising to reclaim the conquered cities. In early September, taxes were increased upon the imperial towns and Augsburg was expected to contribute 300,000 florins to the war chest.[30] By fall of 1552, the Protestant princes had abandoned France and the reconquest of the imperial cities became the goal of a united Empire.

Anticipating this massive onslaught, Henry II appointed the Duke de Guise as his personal lieutenant-general, charging him with the defense of the three bishoprics. Since the Emperor's attack was expected through the duchy of Lorraine, Guise proceeded to select Metz as the city from which the conquests could best be defended.[31] The ramparts and armaments of the city were ingeniously rebuilt and strengthened, under the direction of Guise and his lieutenant, Strozzi. The financing for this operation was obtained through a massive system of venality, devised by the Cardinal de Lorraine. Both in the parlement de Paris and in the présidiaux of the kingdom, eighty additional judicial

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[30] de Selve to Henry II, 2 and 4 September 1552. Ibid., p. 229.

[31] de Selve to Henry II, 2 and 4 September 1552. Ibid., p. 227.

offices were created and sold. Further revenues were obtained when Guienne and its neighboring provinces were allowed to repurchase their rights to the gabelle.[32] While Montmorency abhored all of these expedients as a weakening of the established fiscal and administrative structure, their necessity was evident by the middle of October, when the Emperor surrounded Metz with the massive force of 60,000 troops.

Charles' siege of the city extended far into the winter, with both France and the Empire determined upon victory. For almost three months, the Emperor's armies battered the ramparts of Metz and not until the second day of January 1553, did Charles finally admit defeat. By the time of their retreat, the imperial troops had lost half their men through sickness, death, or desertions[33] and over 300 deaths were reported in the single company of the marquis de Marignano.[34]

Credit for the successful defense of the city belonged entirely to Francis de Guise and greatly

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[32]Bouillé, Vol. I, p. 319.

[33]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 169.

[34]de Selve to Henry II, 4 and 11 January 1553. Négociations de la France dans le Levant . . ., op. cit., Vol. III, p. 245.

strengthened his position at Henry's court. By the end of February, 1553, Cardinal Charles wrote to his sister, Mary of Lorraine, that the Metz defense had placed the House of Guise in full favor with the French monarch,[35] a fact which was confirmed as Henry granted Guise the titles of Prince de Joinville and hereditary seneschal de Champagne.[36] Then, throughout 1553, Guise praises echoed in the highest circles, as the Queen herself credited the retention of Metz entirely to Francis' bravery.[37]

Following upon the momentum of the Metz success, the expansion policy brought renewed interest in Italian affairs and particular interest in the city of Siena. During the summer of 1552, this city had overthrown its Spanish rulers, requesting French protection and establishing a precedent which was

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[35]Cardinal de Lorraine to Mary of Lorr, 25 February 1553. Lettres, Instructions et Mémoires de Marie Stuart, Reine d'Ecosse. Edited by Prince Alexandre Lebanoff. Londres, 1844, Vol. I, p. 41.

[36]Forneron, Vol. I, p. 129.

[37]Catherine de Médicis to the Duchesse de Guise, 3-8 September 1553. Lettres de Catherine de Médicis. Edited by Hector de la Ferrière. Contained in Collection de Documents Inédits. Paris, 1880, Vol. I, pp. 82 and 83.

encouraged by the expansionist faction. Writing from Venice in February of 1553, Ambassador de Selve had urged Henry to continue his interest in Siena and substantially increase his aid to the city.[38]

Within the French court, however, the proponents of expansion had lost much of their influence. While the Metz triumph had seemingly assured a continuation of Guise influence, the constituent elements of their coalition had become increasingly divided. Their influence had dominated the court since the middle of 1550, yet by 1553, many supporters were dissatisfied. Guise power had been built through a careful dispensing of family offices, consistently maintaining a unity of interests between the king's mistress, the military commanders and the Italian allies of the family. Yet by the summer of 1553, internal dissension had jeopardized this unity and damaged the effectiveness of the whole structure.

During the period of their ascendency, the weakness and dissension within the Guise faction had

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[38]de Selve to Henry II, 3 and 18 February 1553. Négociations de la France dans le Levant . . ., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 246.

become clearly evident. In November of 1551, Alvarotti reported to Ferrara that Guise influence upon Henry II had been seriously reduced through policy disputes with Diane de Poitiers.[39] A second element in the Guise coalition was weakened during the summer of 1552, when the sieur de Montlêans charged that Francis de Guise had mismanaged his governorship in Dauphiny. Montlêans, as Lieutenant-Governor in Dauphiny, demanded an investigation of the provincial finances, arguing that Guise had used his post to enrich himself from the recepte générale.[40] While the Duke was eventually declared innocent, the accusation had succeeded in casting doubt upon the administration of all Guise offices. Yet the problems with Diane and the family offices were minimal compared to the crippling divisions which erupted within the Italian elements. Their Italian connections provided the foundation for Guise military and diplomatic efforts, thus the dissension seriously affected both aspects of their policy, rendering the whole coalition inoperable.

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[39]Alvarotti to the Duke of Ferrara, 17 November 1551. Cited in Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 285.

[40]Catherine de Médicis to the Duke de Guise, 9 June 1552. Lettres de Catherine de Médicis . . ., op. cit., Vol. I, p. 63.

The exiled Italian houses had initially been attracted by Guise expansionism, yet they often conflicted among each other as to the most desirable goals for external policy. The disagreement in 1553 revolved around Florence and the French attitude toward its Duke, Cosimo de Medici, the half-brother of Queen Catherine. As an imperial vassal, Cosimo had despoiled the French queen and her supporters of all lands and rights in Florence.[41] Within the Guise faction, the Strozzi grouping of exiled Florentines had reacted to Cosimo's declarations by opposing any cooperation with Florence, and vowing retaliation upon its Duke. Yet, the Ferrara element favored Guise cooperation with Cosimo, arguing that a hostile Florence could potentially upset the security of Siena. Toward the end of 1553, the Cardinal of Ferrara was appointed Governor of Siena and the Guise faction accepted his attitude toward Florence. Upon his arrival in Siena, Ferrara outlined the object of his mission, stating:

> I am here as the first minister of the King without whom you could accomplish nothing; also due to my close relations with the Duke of Florence, for you could do nothing if he were hostile or disagreed.[42]

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[41]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 1553. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 178.

[42]Ricasoli to the Duke of Florence, 2 December 1552. Cited in Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 341.

Following the Guise approval of this Ferrara position, Strozzi led his Florentine allies out of the coalition, destroying its effectiveness as a force for expansion.

Montmorency capitalized upon this split among the Guise partisans by publicly repudiating the Ferrara proposals. He proceeded to emphasize his common interests with the Strozzi group and began to reassert his former influence within the court. By January of 1554, the first effects of Montmorency control became evident, as Strozzi was sent to Siena.[43] Then, by summer of that year, the old Montmorency allies, Cardinal du Bellay and Cardinal d'Armagnac were re-instated at Rome.[44] Reporting back to Ferrara, Ambassador Alvarotti contended that the Constable had acquired full control of the monarch and had rejected any plans for an Italian offensive.[45]

The maintenance of peace and retention of Siena comprised the dual objectives of French policy throughout 1554. Toward the accomplishment of these goals, a series of Siena settlements were proposed by

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[43] Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, pp. 166, 382-385.

[44] Ibid., p. 311.

[45] Ancel, "Introduction," Nonciatures de France, Nonciatures de Paul IV. Edited by Dom René Ancel. Paris, 1909, Vol. I, p. liii.

both Montmorency and Lorraine.[46] The Constable's actions were in complete harmony with his theory of government, yet were primarily stimulated by his desire to promote fiscal economy and avoid military commitment. As early as June 1553, Ambassador Babbi reported back to Florence, that the Constable desired an honorable Siena settlement, yet was more committed to substantially reducing the exhorbitant royal expenses.[47]

More importantly, the Constable intended to conscientiously avoid any further possibility of conflict since his military leadership was already under attack. In early August of 1554, Montmorency had retreated from an armed engagement near Renty, sabotaging a possible French victory and demonstrating incompetent leadership. Claude Haton had noted in his mémoires, that the Montmorency retreat had evoked the charge of treason.[48] Similarly, the Venetian ambassador charged the Constable with cowardice, contending that as long as he held power, there was no possibility of a French offensive in

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[46]Polus to Del Monte, 14 April 1554, also Gualterio to Del Monte, 14 September and 17 November 1554. Ibid., pp. 12, 116 and 166.

[47]Babbi to the Duke of Florence, 2 June 1553. Cited in Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 366.

[48]Haton, Vol. I, p. 3.

Italy.[49]

Guise plans through 1554 and 1555 outwardly conformed to the pacific policy of Montmorency, yet their strategy was actually directed toward confronting the Constable with renewed warfare and further undermining his military leadership. During the summer and fall of 1554, both the English and papal ambassadors reported that a peaceful Siena settlement was the final goal of Lorraine negotiations.[50] At the same time, in an interview with the papal nuncio, Lorraine reflected a definite uncertainty concerning the peace gestures. Thus, the nuncio reported to Julius III that:

> Lorraine spoke about Siena in a rather indefinite way so that he [Gualterio] can't tell whether the Cardinal favors war or peace; on the one hand he showed a keen desire to hear the Emperor's answers while on the other hand it seemed that with the men sent into Piedmont and with the soldiers and horses that are now being sent by sea, there is more than a quest for security.[51]

During 1553, France had obtained 523,075 écus from the Florentines at Lyons and 720,925 écus from the Swiss and

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[49]Jean Cappello, 1554. Rélations-vénitiens. Vol. I, p. 379.

[50]Polus to del Monte, 4 April 1554. Nonciatures de France . . ., op. cit., p. 12. Also Sir John Masone to Queen Mary, 28 October 1554. Cal. S.P., For., Mary, p. 132. Simon Renard to the King of the Romans, 30 November 1554. Cal. S.P., Spanish, Vol. XIII, p. 109.

[51]Gualterio to Julius III, September 1554. Nonciatures de France . . ., op. cit., p. 168.

Germans, then in June of 1554, Lorraine initiated further financial negotiations, all geared toward enlarging the army.[52] By December of 1554, the Florentine bankers had gathered at the Lyons fair to bargain with the Cardinal upon conditions for a new loan.[53] Thus, while superficially supporting peaceful negotiations, the Cardinal consistently worked to obtain the necessary financial support for an Italian campaign.

A further increase in Guise initiatives was caused by the imperial investment of Siena in August of 1554, for while Montmorency was in complete accord with most Lorraine efforts to relieve the city, he opposed any further loans by the French crown. He appealed for papal aid throughout the fall of 1554, and finally offered to neutralize Siena under Julius' protection.[54] Despite the pressure of the continuing siege, the Constable refused to commit France to the Siena defense. With a minimum of French and papal assistance, Blaise de Montluc had directed the city's

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[52]Gualterio to Del Monte, 10 June 1554. Ibid., p. 35. Also see Richard Ehrenberg, Le siècle des Fugger. Translated from the German by Hirsch et al., Paris, 1955, p. 145.

[53]Gualterio to Del Monte, 3 December 1554. Nonciatures de France . . ., op. cit., p. 170.

[54]Gualterio to del Monte, 1 and 14 September 1554. Ibid., p. 105 and p. 116.

resistence through the winters of 1554 and 1555. Finally, with no further aid in sight, Siena capitulated on the fifteenth of April, 1555, returning to the Spanish crown.

For Montmorency, the loss of Siena removed the only obstacle to a final peace. Lord Grey reported late in April, that the Constable had already left to meet the Emperor and would almost certainly conclude a truce.[55] By the end of May, the Venetian ambassador wrote that Montmorency apparently felt the strain on French finances necessitated the conclusion of peace, regardless of the concessions demanded.[56] Despite increasingly vigorous Guise opposition, this Montmorency attitude prevailed and in early February 1556, the Constable signed the Treaty of Vaucelles, just as the Guise faction had negotiated a new Italian league.[57]

The Cardinal de Lorraine deeply resented the secrecy and speed with which Vaucelles had been

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[55]Lord Grey to the Council, 6 May 1555. Cal. S.P., For., Mary, p. 166.

[56]Giacomo Soranzo to the Doge and Senate, 23 May 1555. Cal. S.P.,-Venice., Vol. VI, part I, p. 79.

[57]Gustave B. de Puchesse, "Négociations de Henri II avec le duc de Ferrare, d'après des Documents Inédits (1555-1557)," Revue des Questions Historiques, 5 (1868), pp. 500-502 and 504-505. The basis of the new Guise league consisted in alliances with Ferrara and the pope. Lorraine had concluded the treaty with Ferrara on 15 November 1555, then reached an accord with the pope on 16 December. Details on the treaties are contained in the above mentioned article.

concluded. He complained to Henry that the treaty invalidated his Italian agreements and amounted to a great humiliation both for France and for himself.[58] While lacking united support, Lorraine continued his efforts to promote Italian involvement, both within the French and papal courts. Following so closely upon the Siena loss, Vaucelles had appeared to be a Montmorency concession and Guise opposition served to reaffirm their status as defenders of the exiled Italian interests. They were joined in opposition by Catherine de Medici, who rallied the united support of the Florentine exiles, and while there remained substantial criticism of the Guise alliances, even Madame de Valintinois reaffirmed her support of their Italian goals.[59] With such a strong basis in the French court, the Guise faction turned toward winning the support of the new pope, directing their diplomacy to exploit his anger over the Florentine usurpation of the archbishopric of Pisa.[60]

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[58]J. Alvarotti to the Duke of Ferrara, 18 February 1556. Cited in Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. II, p. 46. This contention is made despite the initial praise with which the Cardinal received the treaty. See Guise, "Mémoires," p. 230. It could be concluded that Lorraine personally respected the terms which the Constable had obtained, yet politically opposed Vaucelles as contradicting the overall Guise policy.

[59]Giacomo Soranzo to the Doge and Senate, 12 June 1556. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VI, part I, pp. 314-316.

[60]Sir Edward Carne to Queen Mary, 4 January 1556. Cal. S.P., For., Mary, pp. 202-203.

By combining the pressure of these diverse elements, Lorraine remained confident that Vaucelles could be broken and his Italian alliances fulfilled.

Papal policy during this period had passed under the direction of Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, who himself hoped to instigate a French invasion of Italy. His uncle, Pope Paul IV was an exiled Neapolitan, an imperial antagonist, who succeeded to the throne of Peter in May of 1555. In his first two months, the new pontiff retained Gualterio as the French nuncio, outwardly pursuing the peaceful policy of Julius III. Then, during July, Paul elevated his young and ambitious nephew, Cardinal Carlo Caraffa, to the primary direction of papal affairs. Rêné Ancel has argued that the new Caraffa policy pursued the dual ends of affecting a desire for peace and ecclesiastical reform, while actually fostering the development of a French campaign against the Spanish possessions in Italy.[61] The peaceful illusion of papal diplomacy was confirmed through Gualterio's retention as French nuncio, yet as the possibility of Italian involvement became greater, Caraffa himself arrived as a special representative to

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[61]Rêné Ancel, "Introduction," Nonciatures de France . . ., op. cit., p. lxiv.

Henry's court.

Vaucelles had been concluded just as Guise and Caraffa had brought France to the threshold of Italian conflict and following the treaty, Caraffa hoped to retrace his steps, this time actually forcing Henry into a declaration of war. Despite this goal, the papacy superficially continued to advocate peace, as in April of 1556, Paul IV praised Henry for the spirit of peace and harmony which he had established, hoping that the French virtues of justice and mercy would direct their policy with regard to the papacy.[62] At his June arrival in France, Cardinal Caraffa had claimed the reinforcement of peace as his sole aim.[63] Despite these statements, the imperial ambassador reported that Caraffa's intrigues had solidifed the French determination to break the Treaty of Vaucelles. The Constable had already been upset over the prisoner exchange, and the Guise faction took advantage of that situation, arguing that an alliance with the pope "and other Italian potentates", could be concluded immediately.[64] By late August, such

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[62]Pope Paul IV to Henry II, 22 April 1556. Printed in Cimber et Danjou, Vol. III, first part, pp. 425-426.

[63]Cardinal Caraffa to the Duke of Paliano, June, 1556. Cal. S.P., For., Mary, p. 233.

[64]Simon Renard to Philip, June, 1556. Cal. S.P., Spanish, Vol. XIII, p. 13.

Caraffa intrigues provoked the Spanish commander, Alba, who publicly accused Pope Paul of planning an attack upon Naples, and accordingly, directed 13,500 Neapolitan troops against the city of Rome. By his conspiracy against Spanish Italy, Caraffa thus incited Alba's attack and geared his whole appeal to the actual necessity of saving Rome.

The Guise-Caraffa alliance was fully evident in the intrigues continuing through the fall of 1556. Caraffa had effected the reconciliation of the houses of Strozzi and Farnese, restoring full unity to the Guise faction. Thereafter, expansion depended only upon the extent of Montmorency objection and the influence brought to bear upon Henry II.

Shortly after Alba marched out of Naples, Cardinal Caraffa had dispatched a letter to the French monarch stating the extreme danger of the Roman position.[66] When Henry assembled his council to consider this information, the Guise faction bitterly attacked Montmorency's procrastination, accusing him of

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[65]Alba to Pope Paul IV, 21 August 1556. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 296.

[66]Romier, Orig. Polit., p. 100.

concealing the true plight of the papacy.[67] Through this council meeting, the Guise faction appealed directly to Henry II, attempting to convince him of the necessity for war preparations.

Then during October of 1556, personal problems even softened the Constable's opposition, as his eagerness to obtain an ecclesiastical favor brought Montmorency to reconsider his rejection of the Caraffa proposals. In late September, Henry II had proposed a marriage between his natural daughter, the Duchess of Castro and the Constable's eldest son, Francis de Montmorency, yet Francis had rejected this offer and married a commoner, Mlle. de Pienes.[68] By the middle of October, Montmorency had persuaded his son to accept the king's matrimonial offer, yet by then a marriage dispensation was necessary. A contemporary Huguenot, Pierre de la Place, contended that Montmorency finally obtained the dispensation only by renouncing his opposition to the Italian campaign.[69]

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[67] Ibid. Also see Haton, p. 27.

[68] Dr. Wotton to the Council, 8 October 1556. Cal. S.P., For., Mary, p. 263.

[69] La Place, pp. 3-4. On 6 May 1557 the English Ambassador, Doctor Wotton reported that Montmorency and the Duchesse de Castro had been married.

Upon his August return to Italy Cardinal Caraffa had been accompanied by Lansac, Strozzi and d'Avanson with 350,000 écus and seven companies of Gascon troops. They ostensibly went to protect French interests in the peninsula, yet their more realistic purpose was to aid Caraffa in preparing for the rupture of Vaucelles.[70] In late September, they wrote to the monarch complaining that their troops and finances were totally inadequate to cope with the existing conditions.[71] To further entice the king, Paul IV promised the kingdom of Naples to his second son, the Duke d'Orléans.[72] The combination of all these factors finally brought Henry to take the final step, and on the twentieth of October, 1556, the Cardinal de Guise wrote that the monarch had officially decided to commission the Duke de Guise with an expedition into Italy.[73] This new commitment had been engineered neither by Guise, nor Caraffa; rather it represented the sheer momentum of the whole series

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[70]Paul Courteault, Blaise de Monluc Historien, Etude critique. Paris, 1908, pp. 317-320.

[71]Strozzi, d'Avanson and Lansac to Henry II, 29 September 1556. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 301.

[72]Bishop of Troyes to Duke de Guise, October, 1556. Ibid., pp. 301-302.

[73]Cardinal de Guise to Duke of Nevers, 20 October 1556. Ibid., p. 301. The commission was officially given to the Duke de Guise on November 14, 1556.

of intrigues which had moved France ever closer to war.

Toward the end of December 1556, Guise arrived at Turin with an army composed of 400 men at arms, 800 light cavalry and 12,000 foot soldiers.[74] Then on the last day of January 1557, the treaty was officially broken and war was declared upon Philip II. At that point, Guise was placed in a difficult position, since the expedition had arrived in Italy lacking either allies or objectives. When Caraffa finally met with the duke toward the middle of February, the campaign had three possible goals, Milan, Tuscany or Naples. At a previous conference in Turin, Ferrara had favored Milan due to its proximity to the Piedmont supply routes.[75] Yet, according to Montluc, Guise interpreted the purpose of his campaign strictly in terms of aiding the Pope, and Paul insisted that Naples should be their target. At the Caraffa meeting, the Cardinal argued that to attack Milan would expose the papal territories to Alba's army and he again insisted upon his uncle's Neopolitan

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[74]Ferdinand Lot. Recherches sur les effectifs des Armées Françaises . . . op. cit., p. 152.

[75]René Ancel. "La question de Sienne et la Politique du Cardinal Carlo Carafa (1556-1557)," Revue Bénédictine, 22, 1 (Jan. 1905), p. 401.

project.[76] Even at that point, it was obvious that the papacy would not supply the 15,000 men which had been promised and the French forces were not sufficient to launch an attack upon Naples. Caraffa sought to obtain more troops throughout March and April, attempting even to secure an alliance with Cosimo de Medici.[77] The impetus behind the whole expedition was destroyed through these long delays and uncertain goals. Each additional month was costing Henry another 50,000 écus and early in March the English ambassador reported of the Italian stalemate:

> . . . Is just informed that the Pope and Duke of Guise do not agree for the Pope wishes the French to invade Naples and the French will not, knowing that they are far unable for that enterprise and further alleging that their coming was only to defend the church.[78]

Guise spent most of the summer unsuccessfully besieging the Central Italian city of Civitella. His dissident commanders argued incessantly, as Montluc remained

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[76]Blaise de Montluc, "Commentaires," Petitot, Vol. XXI, p. 366. "Quelques jours après le duc d'Albe entendit que monsieur de Guyse alloit en Italie pour secourir le Pope . . ." Yet Lucine Romier argues that it is still impossible to discount Guise interest in Naples, Orig. Polit., Vol. I, p. 53. Also Carne to Queen Mary, 6 March 1557. Cal. S.P. For., Mary, p. 291.

[77]Ancel, "La Question de Sienne . . .," op. cit., pp. 411-416.

[78]Sir Edward Carne to Queen Mary, 6 March 1557. Cal. S.P., For., Mary, p. 291.

committed to a Tuscan expedition and continually disobeyed Guise orders.[79]

With the French forces hopelessly enmeshed in Italian politics, the imperial commander, Emmanuel-Philibert, led a massive force of 50,000 troops across the northeastern border of France. On the tenth of August, 1557, while attempting to reinforce the besieged city of St-Quentin, the Montmorency army of 20,000 was descimated and the Constable was captured. Francis Decrue has attributed Montmorency's defeat to the inexperienced commanders and troops upon whom he had to depend, since all the veteran French forces were committed in Italy.[80] Yet, this thesis has been questioned by Sir Charles Oman, who argued that Montmorency and his staff were fully responsible for the disaster. They had conducted an inaccurate reconnaissance of St-Quentin and on that basis, they decided to commit their full force to the defense of the city. The cause of the disaster lay in this decision, not in the lack of an experienced army, for in leading his men around the

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[79]Blaise de Montluc, "Commentaires," Petitot, Vol. XXI, p. 408. Also see Courteault, Blaise de Montluc Historien, op. cit., pp. 333-334.

[80]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency, Connétable et pair de France sous les Rois Henri II, François II et Charles IX. Paris, 1889, p. 202.

Spanish besiegers, Montmorency brought them through a long stretch of marshes, exposing them to the onslaught of the enemy cavalry.[81] This miscalculation wiped out the French army, bringing the capture of Montmorency and the fall of St-Quentin. By the middle of August, all of northern France lay exposed before the Spanish armies.

Angered by papal negotiations with the Empire, Francis de Guise had determined to leave Italy even before the news of St-Quentin's fall. He was informed of the disaster in early September, and within a month, Guise had returned to the French court.[82] Upon the joint advice of the Duchesse de Valintinois, Catherine de Medici and the Cardinal de Lorraine, Henry appointed him as Lieutenant-general of the French armies, with full command both inside and outside of the kingdom.[83]

With French defenses so shattered, Guise immediately began recruiting troops, requesting 8,000 Swiss mercenaries under the terms of their alliance. Soranzo, the Venetian ambassador, reported that the

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[81]Sir Charles Oman, A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century. London, 1937, pp. 259-266.

[82]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. II, p. 186.

[83]Bouillé, p. 412.

monarch went to great lengths to obtain the funds for this recruitment, as he created seventeen new offices of accountants-général, selling each of them for 25,000 francs, then continuing the sales, he added new Keepers of the Seal to each local parlement. Beside the 600,000 francs provided from this venality, Henry negotiated a Lyons loan of 200,000 écus, paying the standard annual interest of sixteen per cent.[84] By the end of November, these measures had enabled the French army to be rebuilt to around 50,000 men. Then, on the last day of December, at the height of winter, this force was led to the investment of Calais.

Paul Van Dyke has effectively demonstrated that Guise strategy did not initially select Calais as a target for attack, yet his conduct of the siege considerably strengthened the Duke's reputation as a military tactitian.[85] He planned the assault at low tide and directed firepower from the beach against the weak sea walls of the city.[86] On the sixth of January,

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[84]Giacomo Soranzo to the Doge and Senate 1 September 1557. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VI, second part, p. 1271.

[85]Paul Van Dyke, "François de Guise and the taking of Calais," American Historical Society Annual Report for 1911. Washington, 1913, Vol. I, pp. 101-107. He has demonstrated that Henry selected Calais as the target for conquest.

[86]Sir Charles Oman, op. cit., pp. 270-273.

the English commander surrendered the city and fourteen days later the neighboring town of Gravelines was taken. Guise profited considerably from directing this unexpected and unopposed campaign, for with little effort he had removed the last English possession on French soil and established himself as a French hero.

The Cardinal de Lorraine capitalized upon this Guise triumph by concluding the marriage arrangements between his niece, Mary Queen of Scots, and the Dauphin Francis.[87] They were then married in late April of 1558, establishing the family ties which were to dominate the next reign. Despite such immediate gains, the Calais victory as their earlier Metz success, served only to scatter the seeds of division within the Guise faction.

The inordinate personal power acquired by the Guise family, alienated the different interest groups within their coalition. Italy, and their Italian connections, had been abandoned following the disastrous Italian campaign of 1556 and 1557.[88] Then, Diane de de Poitiers deserted the faction, promising her aid to

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[87]La Place, pp. 11 and 12.

[88]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. II, p.

the imprisoned Constable de Montmorency.[89] Even the king wrote of his fervent desire to obtain the release of Montmorency, his friend and advisor.[90] Thus, while the Guise family was supreme in France throughout 1558, it became increasingly obvious that separated from their followers, the family would fall upon the Constable's return.

By 1558 the internal dissolution of the Guise faction was again threatening their power within the Kingdom. Henry continued as a ruler totally dependent upon the policy his advisors, yet their positions were totally dependent upon the pressure they could mobilize within the court. The Guise faction had united this support from 1550 to 1553 and from 1556 to 1558. During these periods, they had directed the politics of France and dictated the expansionism of the nation. In the intervening periods, the Constable controlled the Kingdom, orienting it toward the goals of internal consolidation and external coexistence. This clear political alternation lacks any trace of royal

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[89]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency, Connétable et pair de France sous Henri II . . ., op. cit., pp. 215-216.

[90]Ibid., p. 215.

modification and clearly reflects the philosophy of the dictating faction. In this alternating control, the reign of Henry II witnessed the full emergence of the "new aristocracy", as royal policy had become a battle-ground for the Guise and Montmorency factions.

CHAPTER IV

CATEAU-CAMBRESIS AND THE AFTERMATH OF POLITICAL VASCILLATION

On the twenty-second day of June 1558, four representatives from Thionville met with the Duke de Guise to effect the formal capitulation of their city. Thionville had been invested on the eleventh of June and while the ensuing siege cost the life of Marshal de Strozzi, the city had finally been taken.[1] Through the summer of 1558, in the momentum of such expansion, the Duke de Nevers campaigned along the Champagne border and Guise led an expedition to the conquest of Arlons. Then on the thirteenth day of July, this string of French successes was terminated with the Gravelines defeat of Marshal de Thermes. On that date, the Spanish commander trapped de Thermes' army of 6,500 men on the edge of a Flanders inlet, pushing them back against the incoming tide.[2] With this defeat the cause of French expansion was irreparably damaged and the

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[1]See full account of siege by the Duke de Guise, "Le siege et prinse de Thionville," Printed in Cimber et Danjou. Vol. III, pp. 263-272.

[2]Ferdinand Lot, Recherches sur les effectifs des Armées Françaises des Guerres d'Italie aux Guerres de Religion. Paris, 1962, pp. 175-176. Especially valuable is Lot's critical evaluation of Rabutin's account of the size of the French army at this time. Also see Sir Charles Oman, A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century. London, 1937, pp. 277-279.

Spanish peace proposals gained increasing support.

On the thirteenth of October 1558, France and Spain began negotiations at Cercamp with the goal of securing a general European settlement. The initial discussions were marked by the rigid demands of both parties with Alva and the Bishop d'Arras representing Spain while Lorraine, Montmorency and St-André upheld the French claims. Philip II presented his demands toward the end of October, offering to cede his conquests in the Vermandois only if France would relinquish all pretentions to Savoy, Montferrat, Milan, Central Italy and Calais. The indignant French monarch replied that, "If they [the Spanish] hold to such requests, we will only be wasting time there."[3] Yet the negotiations were soon begun, as the Bishop d'Arras artfully transformed the initial Spanish pretensions into more practical demands. By his intrigue, the Spanish were able to capitalize upon the differences existing between the Guise and Montmorency negotiators. Francis Decrue has contended that this Guise-Montmorency dissension was singularly responsible for the French loss of Piedmont, since Lorraine revealed

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[3]Baron Alphonse de Ruble, Le traité de Cateau-Cambresis. Paris, 1889, p. 9. "S'ils nous avoient tenu ce langage, nous avoient tenu ce langage, nous n'aurions jà perdu tant de temps."

that France would not insist upon any Italian territory.[4] When making this assertion, Lorraine had actually intended that the French party should support the Italian claims of the Duke of Savoy, establishing him as an ally and agent of France. It was planned to solidify this alliance by offering Savoy a marriage with Marguerite, the sister of Henry II.[5] Yet, this proposal was thwarted by Montmorency for being unaware of the Guise plans, he proceeded to yield all of Italy directly into the hands of Philip of Spain.

Throughout the remaining sessions, French negotiations were characterized by consistently contradictory and conflicting positions. Their internal dissension worked fully to the advantage of Spain and was clearly reflected in the final treaty. By this document the King of France renounced all claims and possessions within the Italian peninsula, while in the north he retained only the Piedmont fortresses of St-Quentin, Ham, Le Catelet and Thérouanne. In addition to these areas, Philip II received Mariemberg, Ivoy,

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[4]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency, connétable et pair de France sous les Rois Henri II, François II et Charles IX. Paris, 1889, p. 217.

[5]Baron Alphonse de Ruble, Le traité de Cateau-Cambresis. Op. cit., p. 11.

Montmédy, Damvillers, Hesdin and Thionville. To Emmanuel Philibert of Savoy, France ceded Savoy, Bresse, le Bugey, le Valromey and Piedmont. There was not a clear French gain in any article of the treaty for her right to Calais was confirmed for only five years and the imperial claims upon Metz, Toul and Verdun remained firm.[6] Despite this, the treaty was confirmed on April 2, 1559 bringing the return of general European peace and the reestablishment of Montmorency rule.

While Cateau-Cambresis restored peace and order, it effectively ended any French claim to equality with Spain. Within the French context the reasons for this treaty are particularly questionable since their position entitled them to far more consideration. Spain had initiated the conference and despite the firm demands of the Bishop d'Arras, the Spanish Empire was unable to continue the struggle against France. The Spanish casa had been officially bankrupt in 1556 and Philip had defaulted on all his creditors.[7] Finances continued to dictate his position and in February of 1559 he had written to Arras:

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Henri Hauser, "The European Financial Crisis of 1559," Journal of Economic and Business History, 2 (February 1930), p. 251.

> I should tell you that it is impossible for me to continue the war, I have already spent the 1,200,000 ducats which had been raised in Spain and I will need another million between now and March. . . . The situation seems to me so grave that I would like to arrive at a settlement. Do not for any reason break off the entangled negotiations.[8]

None of this Spanish weakness was reflected in the articles of Cateau-Cambresis, for the final treaty represented only the strength of Philip II's empire. Spain's eagerness for the treaty is obvious, but it is more difficult to explain the agreement of the French representatives. Their acceptance of such objectionable provisions indicates a total failure to perceive the weakness of the Spanish position and a strong French desire to sacrifice anything for peace and stability.

The Guise faction has often been charged with effecting Cateau-Cambresis as part of a greater Catholic plan to oppose the religious reformers.[9] One of the first formulations of this thesis can be found in de Thou's account of the Peronne meeting of the Cardinal de Lorraine and the Bishop d'Arras in May

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[8]Henry Lemonnier, Histoire de France depuis les origines jusqu'à la Revolution. Edited by E. Lavisse. Paris, 1903. Vol. V, second part, p. 175.

[9]This is seen in Forneron's work where the Peronne meeting is viewed as the turning point of all Guise policy. Forneron, Vol. I, pp. 233-234.

1558. It is stated that the Spanish Bishop requested the aid and counsel of Lorraine as he projected a great union of Catholic powers. He sought the assistance of France in first securing a general European peace, and then in counteracting the progress of the reform movement.[10] While this was the proposal of the Bishop d'Arras, de Thou's implication of Lorraine acceptance lacks any historical basis. Guillemin refused to accept the validity of the thesis and Lucien Romier has since demonstrated that Lorraine's insistence upon both Piedmont and Calais actually disrupted the proposed union and upset the Peronne conference itself.[11]

Excluding Guise complicity in the Cercamp negotiations, the workings of the Montmorency faction become the more obvious explanation for the treaty. Since his capture at St-Quentin in 1556, the Constable had languished in a Flanders prison awaiting the conclusion of a general peace. Within France, both king and court had expressed increasing distaste for

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[10]Jacques-Auguste de Thou, Histoire Universelle de Jacques-Auguste de Thou depuis 1543 jusqu'en 1607. Translated from the Latin by duPuy and Carte. Londres, 1734, Vol. III, pp. 225-226.

[11]J-J. Guillemin, Le Cardinal de Lorraine, son influence politique et religieuse au XVIe siècle. Paris, 1847, p. 75. Also Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. II, pp. 269-270.

Guise autocracy and correspondingly greater support for the Constable's release.[12] This feeling was echoed in Catherine de Medici's letters to Montmorency for she continually expressed the hope that peace would be concluded and his return secured.[13] This official encouragement brought the Constable to initiate discussions with his jailers as early as September of 1558.[14] These informal talks were aimed not only at securing his release, but served as preliminary steps to the negotiations at Cercamp and eventually to the treaty at Cateau-Cambresis. The seemingly rash acceptance of this treaty can be traced to the increasing frustration of the Montmorency faction both within the French court and at the Flanders conferenees.

Henry's support for the release of the Constable had grown stronger as France had become increasingly beset with internal problems. Guise campaigning had extended the frontiers of France, yet

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[12]The King's views are evident in the letters mentioned by Decrue, see above, p. 84.

[13]Catherine de Médicis to Constable de Montmorency, Sept. and Oct., 1558. Lettres de Catherine de Médicis. Edited by Hector de la Ferrière. Collection de Documents Inédits. Paris, 1880, Vol. I, pp. 118-119.

[14]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency, connétable et pair de France sous Henri II . . ., op. cit., pp. 213-214.

their rule had done little to solve the critical religious and financial problems of Henry's kingdom. Montmorency partisans were convinced that the Constable could restore order to France and during November of 1558, their efforts to obtain his release were substantially increased. The Venetian ambassador reported Guise fears at this renewed activity, writing;

> . . . I am nevertheless told on the best authority that the Constable having lately written an autograph letter to his Majesty, and another in accordance with it to the Duchesse de Valintinois, knowing what her influence can effect with the King and above all at present when there is an open rupture and emnity between her and the Cardinal de Lorraine . . . the Duke de Guise is therefore much afraid lest the King's intense desire for the agreement [the peace treaty], he being thus persuaded by the Duchesse and also by the Constable . . . will cause his Majesty to accept at any rate the conditions of King Philip.[15]

By the fifth of December, this renewed Montmorency support had forced Lorraine's departure from the peace conference, as the Cardinal returned to restructure his alliances within the French court.[16] From that time, the Constable assumed complete control over

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[15]Giovanni Michel to Venetian Senate, Nov. 15, 1558. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VI, Second part, p. 1545.

[16]Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. II, p. 322.

French negotiations, and his diplomacy proceeded to fashion the final form of Cateau-Cambresis, the treaty which allowed for his release.[17]

At Montmorency's return to France in April of 1559, he was confronted with the beginnings of the religious and financial turmoil which was to remain until the end of the sixteenth century. The French church had been confronted with reform elements since the 1518 movement of Bishop Briçonnet in Meaux, yet by 1559 the reform was actually threatening the established church. From 1555 to 1559, Calvin's Geneva had trained thirty-seven pastors for infiltration into France, concentrating their strength in the provinces of Normandy, Dauphiny, Provence, Lyonnais, Languedoc and Navarre.[18] Except for the southern provinces, the concentration of Huguenot missionaries was centered upon the bourgeoisie of the cities, with Paris and Poitiers as their strongholds.[19] This French

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[17]Francis Decrue, Anne duc de Montmorency, Connétable et pair de France sous Henri II . . ., op. cit., p. 229. Also Romier, Orig. Polit., Vol. II, p. 346.

[18]Robert M. Kingdon, Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563. Genève, 1956, pp. 145 and 54-55.

[19]Ibid., pp. 8 and 9. On the question of the class origins and appeal of the Geneva pastors, Kingdon demonstrated that of the 88 sent into France between 1555 and 1563, the bourgeoisie compose more than half of

organization had evolved in strict secrecy and numerous letters from Geneva had exhorted the local congregations to have faith in God and refrain from any public demonstrations.[20] Yet in September of 1557, the Paris police discovered a Huguenot assembly in rue St-Jacques and arrested several participants. In October, seven of these were condemned to the stake by the newly-established inquisitors, Cardinals Bourbon, Châtillon and Lorraine.[21] Then, by May of 1558, the strength of the Paris congregation was such that for seven consecutive days they assembled their people in the university square of Pré aux Clercs, singing the psalms of Clement Marot and Théodore de Bèza.

At the same time, the extent of Huguenot penetration was revealed at the Peronne conference, where Bishop d'Arras produced letters in which Montmorency's nephew, d'Andelot, had revealed himself

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those whose origins can be identified, yet not one pastor can be traced to the peasant classes. Thus he concluded that, "the middle classes were the backbone of Calvinism from its beginning."

[20]John Calvin to Nicolas des Gallars, Sept. 16, 1559. Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève au temps de Calvin. Edited by R. M. Kingdon. Genève, 1962, Vol. II, pp. 130-131.

[21]Henry M. Baird, History of the Rise of the Huguenots of France. New York, 1879, Vol. I, pp. 307-308. Even after St-Jacques, Calvin insisted that the Paris congregation should remain passive and accept their adversity, Campagnie des Pasteurs to l'Eglise de Paris, Sept. 16, 1557. Registers de la Compagnie des Pasteurs . . ., op. cit., pp. 132-134.

as a reformer.[22] Henry II had been furious over the incident at Pré aux Clercs, ordering investigations and punishments by the spiritual primate of France. Henry felt similarly challenged by d'Andelot's action, as he summoned and reprimanded the young noble, demanding that he foresake the Huguenots. Despite royal objections, the Huguenot cause was already well advanced and in late June, its accelerated impetus brought the organization of the first national synod and the consolidation of the "new religion". Thus, by the Constable's return the movement was well established and d'Andelot's sympathies made it clear that the Huguenots had penetrated both the French court and the Montmorency family.

Henry's attitude toward the new doctrine was anything but tolerant, and Montmorency himself had butchered the Vaudois "heretics" as early as 1540, yet both of them were more concerned with the political implications of the movement. D'Andelot's conversion had placed him with the Prince de Condé and the King of Navarre both of whom were already on the fringes of the reform organization. Yet, Robert Kingdon has

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[22]La Place, pp. 13-14. The issue at point in the letter was d'Andelot's criticism of the mass.

demonstrated that Huguenot strength was generally found not among such noble families but in the bourgeoisie and the administrative positions which they occupied. The lay judiciary, especially the parlement de Paris was suspected and accused of being particularly infected with the new ideas. Both the Cardinal de Lorraine and Bouradin, the procureur-général, denounced the Paris judges for deviating from the royal edicts and avoiding the condemnation of heretics.[25] To determine the validity of that claim, Henry II ordered a plenary session of the parlement de Paris for the tenth of June 1559. At this session the full threat of the Huguenot organization became clearly apparent as Councillor Anne duBourg openly challenged the royal edicts concerning reformers.

DuBourg spoke of the providence of God and the necessity for man to conform to this divine counsel. He denounced the general morals of the time, the ambition, the vilence, the adultery and the immense fortunes, contending that it was these very vices which

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[25]Pierre Champion, Paris au temps des Guerres de Religion. Paris, 1938, p. 37.

induced the corrupt church to encourage the burning of the reformers. Continuing, duBourg dismissed the charge of lèse majesté noting that the Huguenots consistently prayed for their King and arguing that even the executions would not eliminate their movement. In conclusion he directly addressed the monarch;

> Sire, your supporters make you the accusor, prosecutor, judge and opponent as your court becomes the executor. For when a poor Christian is tried, it is said that: "the procureur-général of the King and the prosecutor for heresy stand on one side with the accused prisoner on the other." You Sire are seen as his opponent. Then you order by your edicts, "We will that he should die in such a manner." Thus you see that as judge, with your Parlement as executor, they are condemned to die.[26]

As the session ended, Henry sent Captain Montgomery to sieze and imprison duBourg, then later that night he ordered the arrest of eight other councillors of the parlement.[27]

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[26] Ibid., p. 41. "Sire, ces suppôts vous font accusateur, dénonciateur, juge et partie, et votre Cour les exécuteurs. Car quant on a fait le procès à un povre chrestien, on dit: 'Entre le procureur général du roy, demandeur en crime d'hérésie, d'une part contre un tel, prisonnier, accusé d'autre part, etc.' Vous voilà, Sire, partie. Puis vous mandez par vos editz: 'Nous voulons qu'il meure de telle mort.' Vous voilà aussi juge, et vostre Parlement, executeur, les faisant mourir."

[27] La Place, p. 19.

This Huguenot challenge to the French monarchy was particularly significant in 1559 when the cost of decades of warfare and ruinous inflation had undermined the whole financial structure of the monarchy. Reporting back to England at the beginning of June 1559, Throckmorton noted that Henry II had been forced to borrow a million crowns to entertain the princes at Cateau-Cambresis.[28] Then following a July interview with the monarch, Ricasoli wrote that finances had become the first consideration at the French court.[29] In late March, Guise too had noted the financial situation, contending that the treaty would be as costly as a continuation of war.[30] Yet French financial problems were unconnected with the expenditures at Cercamp, or the temporary shortages following the treaty; they stemmed instead from half a century of warfare and expansion. By 1559 the nation felt the full effects of a general wave of European inflation, an inflation made all the more critical by three decades of accumulated debts.

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[28]Throckmorton to Cecil, June 6, 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. I, p. 303.

[29]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, July, 1559. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 302.

[30]Marillac to Francis de Guise, March 25, 1559. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 439.

During the 1530's rising prices throughout Europe bore striking testimony to the influx of Spanish gold from the mines of America. Earl J. Hamilton has estimated that during the sixteenth century the world stock of precious metals actually increased twice as rapidly as the advance in prices.[31] Yet these prices rose to the point of undermining the whole sixteenth century social order. Henri Hauser has demonstrated that using 1500 as the basic price for grain, Grenoble, Rouans and Buis-les-Baronnies had all experienced increases of around thirty per cent by 1531.[32] At the Paris market the grain prices rose sharply in 1531 and 1532 due to crop failures and generally by the late 1530's the average price had almost doubled that of the previous decade.[33] Within the society this inflation was felt even more profoundly by the day labourers and artisans in the fledgling industry. By the late 1530's their discontent was reflected in the strikes of the

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[31]Earl J. Hamilton, American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain, 1501-1650. New York, 1965, p. 301.

[32]Henri Hauser, Recherches et Documents sur l'Histoire des Prix en France de 1500 à 1800. Paris, 1936, pp. 316, 320 and 324. While grain, as any agricultural product, tended to fluctuate in price, the smallest increase in Grenoble was 15.9 per cent in 1547, in Rouans it was 10.6 in 1536 and in Buis-les-Baronnies it was 9.1 in 1536. Generally however the prices after 1531 had increased by about 30 per cent.

[33]Micheline Baulant and Jean Meuvret, Prix des céréales extraits de la Mercuriale de Paris (1520-1698). Vol. I, 1520-1620. Paris, 1960, pp. 30-39.

Lyons printers and in their demands for adjustments in salaries and food allowances.[34]

At the coming of Henry II, Montmorency had taken several steps to centralize French finances and combat the soaring inflation, yet his efforts were continually frustrated by persistent military expenditures. By an Edict of April 1547, the Constable had established two financial controllers, one to remain with the Trésor de l'Epargne, countersigning all deposits or withdrawals and the other to follow the court keeping a register of the household expenses.[35] Montmorency had lost control at court in late 1550, yet when he returned to power in 1553 the Constable continued his financial reforms by creating a hierarchy of officials including seventeen tresoriers générals who were integrated under the central control of the Conseil Privé.[36] While this financial structure could potentially control the excessive expenditures and

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[34]André Liautey, La Hausse des Prix et la lutte contre la cherté en France au XVIe siècle. Paris, 1921, pp. 92-93.

[35]Edouard Meynial, "Etudes sur l'histoire financière du XVIe siècle," Nouvelle Revue Historique de Droit Français et Etranger, 44 (July-Dec., 1920), p. 474.

[36]Ibid., p. 475. This was done by edicts in October 1554 and October 1556.

peculation at the French court, its effectiveness as an economy measure was negated by the ever present demands of Guise expansion.

War in the sixteenth century had become a burdensome expense for the French nation. In the last year of Francis' reign the Venetian ambassador, Marino Cavalli, had reported the general tendency of the monarch to spend any accumulated reserves on military campaigns.[37] While Cavalli remarked that peacetime revenues could produce an annual surplus of about a million écus, he added that French warfare in 1542 and 1543 had cost about twelve million écus.[38] At Francis' death, the total royal debt was already well advanced. There was a surplus of about 500,000 écus in the French treasury, yet the king left short term loans of about 2,500,000 écus with his Lyons creditors.[39]

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[37]Marino Cavalli, 1546. Rélations-vénitiens, Vol. I, pp. 303-305.

[38]Ibid., p. 295.

[39]Roger Doucet, "Le Grand Parti de Lyons au XVI[e] siècle," RH, 171 (1933), pp. 480-481. Branthôme erroneously reported a treasury surplus of five to six million at Henry's accession, yet Doucet's figures are based upon reports of the Imperial Ambassador, of Jean Bodin and of the Bibliothèque Nationale manuscript on receipts and expenditures for 1549. Branthôme, "Les Vies des Grands Capitaines . . .," op. cit., p. 70.

These loans were subject to interest rates of about sixteen per cent and their sum equalled the entire French revenue for the year 1547.

Having inherited such a substantial debt from his father, Henry II had immediately ordered a financial reorganization and had supported the Montmorency attempts at centralizing the economic administration.[40] While taking the initial steps toward reform, the Constable was not the exclusive director of Henry's policy and the financial excesses of the Guise faction consistently undermined his plans for economic and administrative reorganization. Generally the money for Guise expansion was derived from loans and funding operations, as they continued to rely upon the expedients of Francis I. Their warfare in 1552, 1554 and 1558 necessitated the contraction of large loans at the sixteen per cent interest rate of Lyons, Florence, Naples or German creditors.[41] By 1559, on the strength of Guise warfare, these French loans had increased to 7,167,446 écus.[42] Then

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[40]Ricasoli to Cosimo I, Dec. 23, 1547. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 219.

[41]See above, pp. 58, 69-70 and 82.

[42]Julien Laferrière, Le Contrat de Poissy (1561). Paris, 1905, p. 32. Chapter I of this work contains an excellent summary of the accumulation of the French debt under Francis I and Henry II.

following upon the example of Cardinal Tournon, Montmorency had periodically attempted to consolidate and fund this debt in order to systematically retire the loan by fixed payments. This had been done in 1552 when the loans of seven Italian banks were funded and payments at five per cent were guaranteed from the royal income of the Lyons or Toulouse fairs.[43] This funding operation was established by a royal edict of October 1, 1551 and became known as the Grand Parti de Lyons. By November 1, 1555 the total amount of these loans had been reduced to 2,238,369 écus and their interest amounted to only one-tenth of the total income of France.[44] Yet at that same time the Guise-Caraffa faction had obtained royal support for the Italian expedition which eventually destroyed the Grand Parti.

Beside the burden of maintaining four Italian-based armies during 1557, the forces needed before and after the fall of St-Quentin disasterously taxed French finances. Additional loans during that year raised the Lyons debt to 5,420,000 écus and Henry also resorted to creditors outside the Lyons operation, neglecting to pay the Grand Parti on the assigned dates of August,

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[43] Doucet, "Le Grand Parti de Lyon," op. cit., p. 493.

[44] Ibid., pp. 494-495.

1556 or April 1557.[45] In November 1557 a final loan of 200,000 écus was contracted at Lyons and rapidly exhausted in the Calais expedition.[46] After Calais the treasury was drained and the payments to the royal creditors ceased; for all practical purposes the royal government was bankrupt.

Despite the large sum of these short-term private loans, they were still insufficient to finance the massive military expenditures of the 1550's and the solution became an early form of public credit based upon a "floating debt". In 1522 Chancellor duPrat had conceived of this scheme when he borrowed 89,000 écus from the City of Paris. For this sum the king agreed to an annual alienation of 8,407 écus in assigned aides, gabelles and impositions, thus obtaining the favorable interest rate of ten per cent.[47] While these rentes on Paris were initiated under Francis I,

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[45] 30,000 crowns were borrowed from the Roman merchants with the promise of repayment from the next impost, Intelligence from Rome, June 5, 1557. Cal. S.P., For., Mary, p. 313. Also Doucet, "Le Grand Parti de Lyon," op. cit., pp. 506-508.

[46] Ibid., p. 508.

[47] P. Cawès, "Les commencement du crédit en France: les rentes sur l'Hôtel de Ville au XVI^{e} siècle," Revue d'Economie politique, 9 (1895), pp. 112-113.

he had used them as a source of credit only six times and by his death only 500,000 écus had been borrowed on long term loans from Paris.[48]

The reign of Henry II had begun auspiciously as he repaid his father's initial Paris loan. Yet as his expansion policy progressed, the monarchy became increasingly dependent upon the concept of a floating debt. Henry negotiated thirty-five or thirty-six rentes upon Paris during the thirteen years of his rule, the largest being loans for 300,000 écus to finance the march into Metz, Toul and Verdun, and for 290,000 prior to the 1556 expedition into Italy.[49] By 1559 the total amount of this floating debt had reached 6,649,683 écus which was only 500,000 lower than the total of short-term debts.[50] The alienations on this debt represented the crushing annual figure of almost 700,000 écus.[51]

In addition to these large public and private loans, France was further crippled by the temporary financial expedients which had consistently undermined Montmorency's administrative reforms. During the nine

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[48] Ibid., p. 826.

[49] Ibid., pp. 833-835. Cawès gives a complete listing of the dates and amounts of these loans.

[50] Julien Laferrière, op. cit., p. 32.

[51] Ibid.

years prior to 1559, locally debased coinage and entrenched venality had become common methods of obtaining immediate reserves. These were the practices which both hampered any attempts at reducing the crown debt and broke down all efforts to centralize and regulate royal finances.

While Professor Hamilton has demonstrated that there was no lack of precious metals flowing into Europe, the amounts of gold decreased in the late 1540's and with the increasing exploitation of the Potosi mines, silver became the basic import.[52] All European coinage had depended upon the regularity of the Spanish gold shipments and the substitution of silver introduced an uncertain relationship between the face value of the coinage and its intrinsic worth as precious metal. Amid this general economic insecurity, France began creating billion d'argent by adding copper to its silver and creating a new instrument of credit. Frank C. Spooner postulated that the introduction of Spanish silver into France was hindered by the fragmented and regionalized minting procedures which had broken down the monetary circulation of the kingdom.[53] He believed that there

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[52]Earl J. Hamilton, op. cit., pp. 38-42.

[53]Frank C. Spooner, L'Economie Mondiale et les Frappes Monétaires en France, 1493-1680. Paris, 1956, p. 56.

was an increasing stagnation and regionalization of coinage as various mints turned to the billion based coinage. The problems created by the inflation of the 1550's were actually increased through the use of billion and the Sire de Gouberville noted that the increasing discrepancy between the legal and real value of the coinage had forced a return to commercial payments in kind.[54] In figures based on the price of wheat at the Paris market, Levasseur has concluded that between 1520 and 1560 the face value of money had reached three times its intrinsic worth.[55] By 1555 most of the billion had stopped and silver was accepted as the primary basis for French coinage. The period from 1542 to 1554 had introduced a temporary element of royal credit, yet had undermined the whole attempt at centralizing the French economy.

Equally disastrous results were witnessed in the increasing government dependence upon the sale of offices as a means of providing short term financial resources. The practice was first officially recognized in a 1507 ordinance of Louis XII, but its highest

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[54] Journal du Sire de Gouberville, cited in Bernard Schnapper, Les Rentes au XVIe Siècle. Paris, 1957, p. 146.

[55] E. Levasseur, "Une méthode pour mesurer la valeur de l'argent - des variations de la valeur de l'argent au 16e siècle," Journal des Economistes, 47, 10 (Mai, 1856), p. 245.

development came during the reigns of Francis I and Henry II. By an edict of 1522 any office would revert to the king upon the death of its holder and then the bureau des parties casuelles would supervise its distribution for "une finance".[56] When this procedure still did not provide sufficient offices for the king to sell, Francis I had begun the creation of new offices. Each crisis provoked the sale of a series of new posts both to secure loyalty and increase revenue.[57] Many of these new offices carried automatic annoblissement and Francis created them primarily in Normandy and the strategic defensive positions along the Somme.[58] It was through such means that the French monarchy had created the "new aristocracy", the order whose social status became rooted in royal offices rather than in land tenure.

Venality must be accepted as a fact of life in Renaissance France and if carefully organized Francis I demonstrated that these sales could actually strengthen the royal administration. Yet under Henry

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[56]G. Pagès, "La vénalité des offices dans l'Ancienne France," RH, 169 (1932), p. 484.

[57]Jean-Richard Bloch, L'Annoblissement en France au temps de François Ier, op. cit., p. 98.

[58]Ibid., p. 121.

the sale of offices became purely a short-term financial recourse. Any attempt to determine the amounts paid or the number of offices purchased is impossible since nearly all appointments entailed some monetary exchange. However, it can be established that the Guise family supervised the sale of large numbers of offices prior to their campaigns in 1552 and 1558.[59] In both of these instances unnecessary positions were added to the already unwieldly administrative structure, undermining the attempts at bureaucratic consolidation. Yet it was in October of 1554 that the most crippling setback came as the number of royal accountants was doubled, with each accountant serving every second year while receiving an annual pension. The creation and sale of these new offices was rationalized as assuring more accurate and honest control of expenditures, yet actually this venality had been directed toward an immediate increase in royal revenues.[60] The continual alternation between Montmorency and Guise leadership further increased the income from the sale of offices as local officials

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[59] See above, pp. 61-62 and 82.

[60] Meynial, "Etudes sur l'histoire financière . . .," ob. cit., pp. 490-491.

often fluctuated according to their factional identification and rendered the whole administration increasingly unstable.

Conflicting factional politics were clearly reflected in the financial disorder of the 1550's. The Constable's policy was directed toward an overall centralization of power, utilizing the administrative and military bureaucracy of the kingdom. The Guise philosophy was the political alternative for an opposition faction. It depended upon military expansion to solidify a body of followers, then relied upon local leaders to provoke a decentralization in the civil and military administration. By this strategy they had solidified their allies and attained power, yet had brought the accompanying decade of warfare and bankruptcy. By 1555 religious unrest had been introduced into this economic disorder as the reform had found its primary appeal among the discontented bourgeoisie and especially among the merchant classes of southeastern France. In Dauphiny, Provence and Lyonnais economic regionalization had adversely affected interior trade and had come at a time when the centers of French commerce were moving from the Mediterranean to the

Atlantic ports.[61] The large numbers of Huguenot pastors sent into these provinces served to provide the foundation for the future years of religious struggles.[62]

By 1559 these religious and financial pressures had brought Henry II to accept the unfavorable terms of Cateau-Cambresis and to reject the Guise plea for continued fighting.[63] The king desired the release of Montmorency and a return to the policy of peace and internal consolidation. Central authority had been increasingly undermined during the Guise administration as each area developed civil, military and financial independence. Cateau-Cambresis represented a reaction to this breakdown, yet Montmorency was never able to reconstruct the administration, for on the tenth of July

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[61]Albert Chamberland, "Le commerce d'importation en France au milieu du XVIe siècle, d'auprès un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque Nationale," Revue de géographie, 33 (1893), p. 293. Treating the year 1551, this manuscript illustrates the large amounts of trade which England, Spain, Portugal and Anvers were carrying into the Atlantic ports of Dieppe, Boulogne, Rouen, Nantes, La Rochelle, Havre de Grace and Lower Brittany. Fernand Braudel, La Méditerranée et le Monde méditerranéen à l'epoque de Philippe II. Paris, 1949, pp. 369-372. Also Roland Mousnier, Les XVIe et XVIIe siècles. Vol. IV, Histoire Générale des Civilisations. Revised edition. Paris, 1965, p. 86.

[62]Robert Kingdon, op. cit. Of the sixty-three known destinations of the Geneva pastors, between 1555 and 1563, twenty-nine were sent into the southeastern part of France, into Guyenne, Gascony, Languedoc, Lyonnais, Dauphiné and Provence.

[63]Throckmorton to Cecil, June 7, 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. I, p. 305.

1559 his official support ended with the death of Henry II. The chaos of Henry's reign was then inherited by his young son Francis II, yet direction of the French kingdom fell to the all-powerful house of Guise.

CHAPTER V

EARLY GUISE RULE: RETRENCHMENT, RELIGION AND THE CONSPIRACY OF AMBOISE

Henry II had expired on the tenth day of July 1559, and there followed a month of ceremonies before the dead king was interred on the thirteenth of August.[1] Throughout these rites, Montmorency was occupied by his official duties as grand master of the French court, and during this same time the Guise family proceeded to solidify their position of leadership with the new king, Francis II. As the nephew of Guise and Lorraine it was even more natural that Francis should turn to them for advice and only a week after Henry's death the Venetian ambassador reported that the Duke de Guise and Cardinal de Lorraine had acquired full control of the Conseil d'Affairs.[2] Soon after this the parlement de Paris was informed of the new Guise position as their representatives were informed that the uncles of the king would have complete control over all royal matters.[3]

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[1]Seigneur de la Borde, "Le Trespas et ordre des obseques, funerailles et enterrement de feu des tresheureuse mémoire le Roy Henri deuxième de ce nom . . .," Published in Cimber et Danjou, Vol. III, pp. 307-348.

[2]Jean Michel to the Doge and Senate, 16 July 1559. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, p. 109.

[3]La Planche, p. 13.

Thus, by the end of August, Montmorency had retired from the court and the Florentine ambassador wrote that within France the Cardinal de Lorraine had become both king and pope.[4]

For the first time in 1559, the Guise family controlled France under an official mandate and their power was no longer totally dependent upon the support of a body of allies. Simultaneously their policy was altered to correspond to this new authority as they passed from an opposition faction to a position of legitimate power. No longer could the Guise be seen as the champions of regional independence or the advocates of foreign intervention, rather in 1559 they came to represent the established government structure as they continued the Montmorency policy of centralizing and solidifying the internal power of the French monarchy.

While all affairs in the new government were determined in private conferences of Guise, Lorraine and Catherine de Medici, the execution of these decisions became even more reliant upon their control of the administrative framework.[5] To this end they carried

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[4]Ibid., pp. 14-15. Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 27 August 1559. Neg. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 404.

[5]Jean Michel to the Doge and Senate, 16 July 1559. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, p. 109.

forward the development of the "bureaucratic" structure and attempted to carve out areas of responsibility within the Conseil du Roi. Thus the Duke de Guise assumed charge of military affairs with the assistance of the Duke d'Aumale, the Duke d'Etampes and the Marshals Brissac and St-André. For civil affairs, the Cardinal de Lorraine was assisted by Chancellor Olivier, President l'Hospital of the Chambre des comptes, Archbishop Marillac of Vienne and Bishops Morvilliers of Orléans, Montluc of Valence and Pelleve of Amiens.[6] Yet, this Guise attempt at obtaining a departmental hierarchy was confronted by the same problems which had previously hindered Montmorency centralization, for the governmental structure of sixteenth century France had still failed to systematically penetrate the provinces and localities. The baillis and sénéchaux were the local agents of the king, but they were directly subordinate to the provincial governors who could restrict the influence of the central administration and thus defeat any royal policy.

To bridge this gap between the conseil d'affairs and the local representatives, the Guise family continued developing the departmentalized

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[6]Francis Decrue, Anne duc et connétable de Montmorency . . . sous Henri II . . . op. cit., pp. 258-259.

sécrétaires d'état. These four officials supervised all correspondence, edicts and pronouncements within specified geographic regions and they maintained constant contact with the problems encountered within their areas of responsibility. While the posts had been created by Francis I, Montmorency had given them a supervisory capacity and at the end of March, 1559, he had brought Henry II to extend their jurisdiction as, ". . . sécrétaires d'état et de nos finances."[7] These secretaries were the sole means of ensuring any correlation between the central government and its local agents, yet their authority was too indirect to ensure any obedience on the local level.

During the reign of Henry II the provincial aristocracy had rallied around the Guise faction in opposing government centralization, then in 1559 the roles were reversed and it was the Guise who came to represent the centralizing power of the kingdom, it was the Guise who engendered the opposition of their former noble allies. This new emphasis of Guise policy resulted from their personal realization of power, but it was also due to their recognition of the desperate

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[7] Paul-M. Bondois, "Les secrétaires d'état sous François II (1559-1560), Notes critique," Revue Henri IV, 3, 1 (January 1909), pp. 47-48. Also see Roger Doucet, Les Institutions de la France au XVIe siècle, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 159-165.

state of the French kingdom. The economic and civil unrest within France necessitated an extension of royal control for at Francis' coronation the French debt had reached 18,000,000 écus and reserves were insufficient to meet the wages of the soldiers, captains, judges or governors.[8] By July of 1559, the whole structure of French finance had collapsed and the first two weeks of Guise rule were devoted to restoring fiscal stability through devising a sweeping system of financial reforms. The Venetian ambassador noted that these strict economies affected every aspect of royal policy as ecclesiastical benefices were resigned and resold,[9] as the gifts of "joyeux avènement" were reclaimed from Francis' lieutenants[10] and as the Archbishop of Reims was reminded that he should pay the costs of the royal coronation.[11] Then throughout the summer the French persistently demanded reductions in the original Spanish dowry agreement and Henry's daughter, Elizabeth, eventually brought only one-third of her dowry to

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[8]Romier, Amboise, p. 6.

[9]Jean Michel, 1561. Rélations-vénitiens, p. 409. Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 19 August 1559. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 404.

[10]Romier, Amboise, p. 7.

[11]Francis II to the Archbishop of Reims, 15 August 1559. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 117-119.

Philip II.[12] While determined to enforce such economies, Guise planning dealt more fundamentally with fiscal and administrative reform as they began to clear away years of accumulated pensions and debts.

During August, the Cardinal had opened negotiations with the Lyons creditors, aimed at refunding the French debt at an interest rate lower than the prevailing sixteen per cent. By March of 1560 he had succeeded, forcing them to accept 8.3 per cent and promising repayment within five years.[13] While working to fund the French deficit as a "floating loan", Lorraine accepted a Paris proposal to investigate the initial causes of the whole financial disorder. This proposal from the cour des monnaies suggested an investigation of the relationship between the circulation of coinage and the rising prices in France.[14] In accordance with this proposal, Francis II ordered a six-man commission to study the regional differences in

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[12]Bishop of Limoges to Francis II, 19-20 July 1559. Ibid., pp. 20-23. Bishop of Limoges to the Cardinal of Lorraine and Duke de Guise, 4 August 1559. Ibid., pp. 73-74.

[13]Jean Michel, 1561. Rélations-vénitiens, p. 411. Jean Michel to the Doge and Senate, 31 March 1560. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, p. 181. Also see Romier, Amboise, p. 7.

[14]Cour des monnaies to the Cardinal de Lorraine, 23 October 1559. Régistres des Délibérations du Bureau de la Ville de Paris, published in Histoire Générale de Paris. Edited by Alexandre Tuetey. Paris, 1892, Vol. V, p. 41.

minting procedures and the effects of foreign money in causing the fluctuations of French prices.[15] While this investigation led to the devaluation of 1561 and represented a significant step toward a "bureaucratic" concept of fiscal planning, the government lacked sufficient control to implement or enforce the decisions of the commission.

In an attempt to acquire more complete control over the existing royal administration, Lorraine had attempted to curtail the venality and favoritism which determined local appointments. Shortly after assuming power he had ordered all those desiring favors to leave the court within twenty-four hours.[16] Such action was necessary due to the massive, inefficient administration which had grown up during the reign of Henry II. The number of officeholders had continually multiplied as France required additional wartime revenue and as the status of the "new aristocracy" became increasingly dependent upon royal pensions.[17] The Cardinal began to alleviate this financial drain in

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[15]Francis II to the Cour des monnaies, 8 November 1559. Ibid., p. 41.

[16]J-B de Valincourt, La vie de François de Lorraine, duc de Guise. Paris, 1681, p. 65.

[17]See above, pp. 108-110.

September of 1559 when he issued the Edict of Villiers-Cotteret. This edict reinforced an earlier declaration of 1541 whereby an officeholder was forbidden to name his successor and the king claimed the right to dispense all posts following the death of their holders.[18] At the same time the edict supressed the "offices alternatifs" in both justice and finance and Francis pledged to reduce the royal offices to the number dispensed by Louis XII.[19]

While these revisions were all oriented toward constructing a stronger state and solidifying Guise power, they were the very measures which the Guise faction had opposed during the reign of Henry II. Even more of a change was evident in their new approach to military affairs for by a royal ordinance on the fifteenth of July, the Duke de Guise substantially reduced the size of the French army.[20] This order was

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[18]Edict of Villiers-Cotteret, issued 7 September and registered 11 September 1559. Nég. lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 111. Edouard Meynial, "Etudes sur l'histoire financière du XVI^e siècle," Nouvelle Revue Historique de Droit Français et Etranger, 44 (July-December 1920), p. 491. Also see G. Pagès, "La Vénalité des offices dans l'ancienne France," RH, 169 (1932), p. 485.

[19]For creation of "Offices alternatifs" see above, p. 110. Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 18 September 1559. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 405. Also See G. Pagès, "La vénalité des offices . . .," op. cit., p. 485.

[20]Report of the Département des Commissaires for the quarter, October to December 1559, issued 6 April 1560. Nég. lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 346-349. Also see Lucien Romier, Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 199.

directed against the most faithful Guise supporters, as even Montluc's company was cut from fifty to thirty lances.[21] Such retrenchment was heartily praised by the Florentine and Venetian ambassadors, as by September the new rulers had halved court expenditures while substantially increasing the royal revenues.[22] These same revisions began the creation of a solid body of opposition among the deprived officeholders, pensioners and unpaid soldiers. It was an opposition which stood for most of the principles which the Guise had formerly supported, an opposition demanding local independence and military expansion.

The resistance engendered by the Guise government fed upon resentment against their policies of financial retrenchment and religious orthodoxy. It encompassed three social groups, as dissatisfaction was found among the feudal nobility, the "new aristocracy" and the reform congregations. The feudal nobility and the "new aristocracy" were most deeply affected by the fiscal reforms since both groups had come to feel that they possessed a certain right to

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[21] Paul Courteault, Blaise de Montluc Historien, Etude critique, Paris, 1908, p. 387.

[22] Jean Michel, 1561. Rélations-vénitiens, pp. 405 and 411. Ricasoli to Cosimo I, 18 September 1559. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 405. Also see Francis II to the Bishop of Limoges, August 1559. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 106.

royal pensions.[23] The economic position of the great feudal nobles had been declining for over a century and in 1560 the Venetian ambassador characterized their average position,

> . . . their simple and secluded life in the chateaux demanding neither great expenses, attendants, clothes, costly horses, banquets, nor any of the other magnificent outlays of those who are at the court.[24]

These feudal nobles, with their fixed rentes, had suffered most seriously from the inflation of the 1550's, and the Guise reductions in pensions and offices served to further undermine their status. The "new aristocracy" was also affected by the retrenchment since their whole position depended upon royal patronage. The military revisions had released scores of seigneurial commanders, as they and their troops had disbanded to ravage the countryside.[25]

The opposition among certain elements of the bourgeoisie stemmed from a combination of financial discontent and increasing religious dissatisfaction. The breakdown in coinage and commerce had adversely

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[23]Jean Michel, 1561. Rélations-vénitiens, p. 407.

[24]Michel Suriano, 1561. Ibid., p. 489.

[25]D. D'Aussy, François de la Noue d'après son récent historien, La Rochelle, 1893, p. 164. Also see Romier, Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 205.

affected the economic status of the merchant classes, yet it was the strict persecution of the reform religion which most seriously affected the middle classes.

Both the nobles and the bourgeois Huguenots were opposed to each other, yet by the estates of 1560, both of them blamed their particular difficulties upon the central government. The cahier of the nobility demanded the restoration of all noble pensions, the appointment of gentilhommes to replace all commoners holding offices in the royal service and the right for the noble to engage in commerce.[26] At the other extreme were the diametrically opposed demands of the third estate, asking a further reduction in the court offices, increased appointments of non-noble officials and complaining of the royal protection accorded to the nobility and military.[27] Despite the fact that these demands were totally opposed to each other, during the winter of 1559 and 1560 the noble and bourgeois classes began to merge with each other in a mutual opposition to the Guise government.

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[26]Cahier de la Noblesse, Etats-Generaux de 1560. Recueil des cahiers généraux des trois ordres aux Etats-Généraux. Edited by Lalourcé. Vol. I, "Etats d'Orléans en 1560," Paris, 1789, pp. 136-137, 173 and 210-211.

[27]Cahier de la troisieme état, Etats-Généraux de 1560. Ibid., pp. 57, 318 and 321.

At a very early stage the focal point for this opposition centred about King Antoine of Navarre, the highest ranking prince of the blood. Antoine possessed the legal right to sit on the Conseil d'affairs and was urged to exercise that privilege in order to counteract Guise policy. By August of 1559 the Cardinal de Sens had convicted Anne duBourg of heresy and the Paris reform congregation felt itself increasingly threatened.[28] Their pastor, Antoine de La Roche-Chandieu, then sent an envoy to Navarre, pleading that he reclaim his "rights" as the first prince of the blood and assuring him the support of all the pastors and "almost all the nobility."[29] This promise was reinforced as the Princes de Condé, de La Roche-sur-Yon, the Cardinal de Chastillon, the sieur d'Andelot and the Admiral Colligny all encouraged Navarre to claim his rights and counteract Guise autocracy.[30] At the beginning of August, all of these princes met with Navarre at Vendôme and finally persuaded him to join the royal court. However the

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[28]Throckmorton to the Queen, 1 August 1559. Cal. S.P., For. Eliz., Vol. I, p. 433.

[29]Morel to Calvin, 1 August 1559. Cited in Romier, Amboise, p. 19.

[30]La Place, p. 37.

Guise family had long been prepared for Navarre's arrival as they planned to pacify all objections by flattering his exalted position. To this end the Duke de Guise would ride out and personally conduct Navarre to the court, according him the full honor and privilege of his status.[31] The Venetian ambassador reported of these Guise plans,

> . . . they do not fail in every possible way to concile Navarre's adherents. I hear that they place great reliance on the inconsistence, levity and vanity of Navarre and hope not only to cajole him but to gain him entirely to their side.[32]

Following the royal coronation on the thirteenth of October, the Cardinal of Lorraine invited Navarre to accompany Francis II on a tour of the duchies of Lorraine and Barrois, but by that time Antoine was satisfied that his rights were being protected.[33] Thus he left the court on the twenty-second of October having been convinced that the affairs of France were well in control.

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[31]La Planche, pp. 26-28. Jean Michel to the Doge and Senate, 2 August 1559. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, p. 115. Also see Throckmorton to the Queen, 8 August 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. I, p. 457. De Thou, Histoire Universelle . . ., op. cit., Vol. III, p. 379.

[32]Jean Michel to the Doge and Senate, 2 August 1559. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, p. 453.

[33]Charles de Bourbon to the Duchess of Navarre, 3 September 1559. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 108-109. Also see Romier, Amboise, p. 28.

By December the financial and religious situation of France had again deteriorated to the point of creating an even greater unity among the government opposition. By the middle of November, the Florentine ambassador reported that the state of the French treasury was the subject of universal complaint as the king had repudiated almost all the royal debts.[34] Despite the attempts at economy, it was necessary to levy additional taxes in January of 1560,[35] at the same time bolstering crown revenues through the sale of wood from the Languedoc forests.[36]

Religiously the winter months witnessed increasing tension within the reform communities, as the December twenty-first execution of Anne duBourg sparked a series of Huguenot reprisals. At Orléans, one of their congregations released a condemned heretic and fled with him to Geneva.[37] Then toward the middle of

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[34]Alfonso Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 14 November 1559. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 406.

[35]Alfonso Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 10 January 1560. Ibid., p. 408.

[36]Sieur de Forquevaulx to the Cardinal de Lorraine, 19 January 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II., p. 210.

[37]Alfonso Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 29 December 1559. Nég. Dipl., Fr.- Tosc., Vol. III, p. 407. La Planche, p. 47.

December, Antoine Minard the royal procureur-général was shot down as he entered his house. The procureur-général being the official charged with arresting the reformers, his death was taken as an excuse for more intensive persecution of the new religion.[38]

The uniting of the noble and bourgeois opposition began at this time as the Venetian ambassador noted that the French nobles had become especially infected by the reform, yet actually the coalition of aristocratic and reform elements represented only a political unity expressing common opposition to the Guise government.[39] The position of the reform congregations had been evident in pastor Chandieu's earlier offer to Navarre, and now they offered the national structure of the church to be used as a weapon against Guise persecution.

The leadership of the aristocracy had been more reticent about joining the military and religious malcontents, yet the combination of economic pressure and centralization slowly forced them into the anti-Guise

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[38]Arrest de la cour, 18 December 1559. Guise, "Mémoires," p. 453. La Planche, pp. 46 and 47.

[39]Jean Michel, 1561. Rélations-vénitiens, p. 413.

coalition. The Guise themselves had harmed their position during the winter for following the September pacification of Navarre they had proceeded to exploit their stabilized position, claiming a full share of the available offices and patronage. Early in November, the Duke de Guise obtained the support of Catherine de Medici in his quest for the Constable's office of grand master, and later that same month she persuaded Montmorency to surrender the post.[40] Then another major position was acquired in December, as Noailles was removed from the governorship of Languedoc and the post was immediately claimed by the Duke de Guise.[41] In January, however, the Duke and Cardinal created their most dangerous enemies when they awarded the governorship of Picardy to their ally Brissac, despite the fact that the province had been previously promised to the Prince de Condé.[42] While such acquisitions increased the Guise fortune to over 600,000 écus,[43] their undisciplined use of power alienated some of the most

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[40]Killigrew and Jones to the Queen, 5 December 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 161. La Place, p. 38. La Planche, p. 30.

[41]Killigrew and Jones to the Queen, 18 December 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 204.

[42]La Place, p. 38.

[43]Jean Michel, 1561. Rélations-vénitiens, p. 437.

prominent families of the French aristocracy and further swelled the ranks of their opposition.

By the middle of winter there was an evident unity of interest among the Guise opposition and within the structure of the Huguenot organization a program of actual resistance began to take form. This combination of religious and political elements was reported by the Venetian ambassador as he noted that,

> All the elements of discontent joined with the reformers, hoping to find a solid body of followers under the pretext of religion and to be able to act under this guise within the kingdom.[44]

Thus, this political and religious union initially developed out of the necessity for the reform congregation to defend their right to public worship, a right denied them by the 1558 Edict of Ecouen.

It was the Huguenot pastor, Antoine de la Roche-Chandieu, who first approached Condé and asked him to direct the resistance to Guise rule. Condé, a younger brother of Antoine de Navarre, was an impoverished Bourbon possessing neither offices nor titles, a prince who had already been betrayed through

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[44]Michel Suriano, 1561. Ibid., p. 523.

the Guise reassignment of Picardy.[45] But Condé's interest in the resistance movement actually dated from late September, just after Navarre had rejected its leadership.[46] At that time he and the Admiral Colligny had met at la Ferté where they had attempted to devise some means of asserting Bourbon rights under the new monarch.[47] The integration of political and religious opposition was thus initiated during the fall months of 1559, as pastors Chandieu, Morel and La Rivière encouraged Condé to organize his forces through their local Huguenot conventicules. Condé retreated from such public recruitment, and while remaining the figurehead behind the resistance, he refused to openly acknowledge his part in the increasingly militant movement. For public leadership, Condé had first sought Montmorency's nephew, the sieur d'Andelot, yet due to

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[45]Romier, Amboise, p. 11. Henri Naef, La conjuration d'Amboise et Genève, Genève, 1922, pp. 35-50. While Naef tries to build a case for La Renaudie leadership of the whole movement, he does not sufficiently account for the financing and organization of the conspiracy.

[46]Romier, Amboise, p. 11. The captured prisoners at Amboise stated that the conspiracy had begun about a month after the death of Henry II and was definitely underway by Francis' coronation.

[47]C. Paillard, "Additions critiques à l'histoire de la conjuration d'Amboise," RH, 14 (1880), p. 70.

the risk involved it was finally necessary to select a minor member of the lesser nobility, the sieur de La Renaudie. Yet the Huguenot historian, Regnier de la Planche, has insisted that while Condé refused public leadership, he retained supreme control of the whole resistance movement, appointing La Renaudie only because, "he judged him the proper man to direct the affair under the prince's authority [Condé]."[48] Lucien Romier further documented this contention by noting that throughout the initial months of organization, it was the reform church which became the indispensible structure for unifying the noble and bourgeois resistance. He argues that such leaders as Montbrun, La Rochefoucauld, Mauvans and even La Renaudie were introduced into the movement through the local pastors.[49]

While La Renaudie was considered a satisfactory commander by both Condé and pastor Chandieu, his leadership was severely condemned by Calvin. In August of 1559, when Navarre leadership was being sought, the Geneva leader had written,

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[48]La Planche, p. 45.

[49]Romier, Amboise, pp. 35-36.

> If one drop of blood is spilled, rivers will be filled with it. It is better that we should perish a hundred times over than cause the name of Christianity and the gospel to be exposed to such opprobium . . . [but] . . . if the princes of the blood are required to maintain their rights for the common good and if the parlement courts join with them, it would be permissible for all good men to take a strong stand.[50]

This statement implied complete approval for the leadership of Navarre and could have been extended to support resistance by Condé, but La Renaudie was not a prince of the blood. Chaudieu and La Renaudie went to solicit Geneva support in October of 1559, but they failed completely and Calvin condemned their plan of forcibly seizing the king and his court. Feeling the whole movement to be poorly arranged, Calvin refused to permit the participation of any of the reform congregations.[51]

Despite Geneva disapproval, the French Huguenots were already deeply involved in organizing the resistance. The groups in Paris and Languedoc had gone too far to turn back, and the local congregations proceeded to split between those who complied with the Geneva order and those who continued in their adherence

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[50]Calvin to Colligny, August 1559. Paillard, op. cit., p. 323.

[51]Naef, op. cit., pp. 460-464.

to the conspiracy. Both Theodore Bèza and Clement Morel remained committed to the revolt and Robert Kingdon has argued that even the Geneva Company of Pastors may have supported the leadership of La Renaudie.[52] Yet while many pastors remained committed to the resistance, Calvin's disapproval substantially reduced the effectiveness of local recruitment and seriously weakened the unity of the emerging coalition.

The organization of this militant opposition to Guise rule had solidified by February and at the beginning of that month, La Renaudie gathered his provincial agents at Nantes claiming that they formed a meeting of the third estate. Before this assembly, he argued that the kingdom must be taken from the hands of the foreigners who were ruling in contravention of the ancient laws of France. He charged that the Guise family was sworn to the destruction of the king, of his brothers, of the princes of the blood and of all French nobles who opposed them.[53] According to La Planche, La Renaudie then proceeded to reveal, ". . . the prince by whom he was charged . . . the chief, masqué, muet"

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[52]Robert Kingdon, Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, Genève, 1956, p. 72.

[53]La Planche, p. 58.

and his own commission from this silent leader.[54] Having received these credentials, the assembly voted to follow the advice of La Renaudie and they accepted his plan to attack the royal court at Blois on the tenth of March. The assembly promised 500 troops and appointed as commanders, the Baron de Castelnau for Gascony, Captain Mazères for Béarn, Mesnil for Perigord, Maillé-Brezé for Poitou, Chesnaye for Anjou, Sainte-Marie for Normandy, Coquerville for Picardy and Châteauneuf for Provence and Languedoc.[55] Shortly after the Nantes meeting, the English ambassador was contacted regarding the possibility of English aid for the impending conspiracy, to which he replied that,

> . . . if it could be proved that the French princes were engaged in this movement for the preservation of the liberties of the king and the realm, he thought that the Queen would not be wanting in kind offices . . .[56]

It was later found that the exorbitant wages received by the Huguenot forces were possible because Elizabeth of England did comply with the requests of the conspirators, thus committing herself to the overthrow

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[54] Ibid. Also Pierre Bourdeillas abbé et seigneur de Brauthôme, "Les Vies des Grands Capitaines de siècle dernier," Oeuvres complates de Brauthome. Paris, 1875, Vol. V, first book, second part, p. 266.

[55] La Planche, p. 59.

[56] Mundt to Cecil, 27 February 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 412.

of Guise rule.[57]

Throughout early 1560, Throckmorton dispatches noted the continuing solidification of the conspiracy,[58] yet in the last month prior to the Blois attack there came a succession of setbacks and miscalculations which seriously undermined the unity of the movement. Calvin's repudiation had already brought many reform conventicules to dissociate themselves from the plot, yet throughout the winter La Renaudie and his associates continued to claim Geneva approval. Following the Nantes assembly, Calvin moved to correct this misrepresentation as he strongly reproached the position of Bèza, crying,

> I did not think I would live to see the day when we had lost all credit among those who call themselves faithful. Is it necessary that the church of Geneva be finally stripped of its followers.[59]

To clarify his attitude among the local French congregations, Calvin dispatched Arnaud Blanc who

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[57]Chantonnay to Philip II, 15 March 1560. Printed in Paillard, op. cit., p. 104. Jean Michel to the Doge and Senate, 17 March 1560. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, p. 161.

[58]Throckmorton to the Council, 4 February 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 351.

[59]Paillard, op. cit., p. 324. ". . . je ne pensois pas tant vivre que de voir le jour auquel nous eussions perdu tout crédit envers ceux qui se renomment fidèles. Faut-il donc que l'eglise de Genève soit ainsy meprisée de ses enfants."

persuaded Nîmes and several other Languedoc congregations to withdraw from the conspiracy. While Blanc is the only agent noted in the records of the Geneva Company of Pastors, Robert Kingdon believes that he was just one of a series of agents sent by Calvin to clarify the claims of La Renaudie. Following this Geneva offensive, only the Provençal and Paris churches remained tied to the conspiracy.[60]

All of this activity in arranging the conspiracy had not passed without arousing Guise suspicions, and even before the assembly at Nantes, the English ambassador reported that the Cardinal of Lorraine had begun to fear any secret activity at the court.[61] Then toward the middle of February, Pierre des Avenelles, a Paris lawyer, betrayed the whole conspiracy to Milet the secretary of the Duke de Guise. Des Avenelles had opened his house to La Renaudie while the latter conferred with his Paris colleagues concerning the Blois attack, this his report to Milet provided the first concrete indication of the developing plot.[62] Toward the end of February, Milet delivered

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[60]Robert Kingdon, Geneva and the Coming of the Wars . . ., op. cit., p. 73.

[61]Killigrew and Jones to Cecil, 28 January 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 337.

[62]La Planche, pp. 62-63.

this confession to the Cardinal who was then stationed at Blois with the French court.[63] Both La Place and La Planche reported that this news provoked great fear within the court and caused its removal to the heavily fortified city of Amboise, yet there appeared to be no such reaction. For the previous four months, the court had intended to spend the lenten season at Amboise and their departure from Blois was in keeping with these plans.[64] While there was not the absolute panic noted by the Huguenot historians, the Guise leaders remained uncertain of the date for the planned attack and the Cardinal of Lorraine was reported to be very apprehensive concerning the strength of the plot.[65]

Suspecting the involvement of the Constable's nephews, the Cardinal de Lorraine persuaded Catherine de Medici to call Admiral Colligny and d'Andelot to the court. Upon the arrival of Colligny, Catherine asked his advice concerning the proper method of dealing with the impending conspiracy and he answered that the general discontent sweeping the kingdom flowed

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[63]Romier, Amboise, p. 90.

[64]Chantonnay to Philip II, 2 December 1559. Cited in Paillard, op. cit., p. 66.

[65]Throckmorton to Cecil, 7 and 8 March 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 437.

both from religious and political mismanagement. As an immediate solution to these problems, he proposed that the French princes should be accorded their rightful places in the government and that all religious persecution should be stopped.[66] Within about a week of Colligny's address, the Conseil d'affairs proposed an edict intended to pacify the religious opposition which had played such an evident part in forming the conspiracy. Thus, as published at Amboise on the eighth of March, this declaration pardoned all past crimes committed in the name of religion and entreated all French subjects to remain, ". . . good Catholics, truly faithful and obedient sons of the Roman church. . . ." As its second article, the edict excluded the Geneva preachers and others who had plotted against the king or his ministers.[67]

Traditionally this edict of Amboise has been attributed to the influence of Catherine de Medici and the persuasiveness of Colligny's advice, yet in a June letter to the Cardinals of Ferrara and Tournon, Lorraine claimed that he had supervised the formulation of the

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[66]La Planche, pp. 66-67.

[67]Déclaration du Roi portant abolition et pardon général pour le crime d'Hérésie, March 1560. Nég. lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 310. H. Naef, La Conjuration d'Amboise, op. cit., p. 58. Also La Planche, p. 68.

document.[68] He then proceeded to clarify the legal position of the edict, arguing that only by separating ecclesiastical and civil jurisdictions could the religious crime of heresy be distinguished from the civil crime of sedition.

> The crime [heresy] is ecclesiastical as it contravenes none of the King's laws. Thus, the monarch allowed his edict to proclaim nothing regarding ecclesiastical law. He writes giving them these orders [as contained in the edict] and specifying those who should be imprisoned by this law; nothing is prescribed for the bishops or inquisitors and neither [of them] are permitted to act under his authority and jurisdiction.[69]

The Cardinal wrote that this separation of religious and civil spheres would enable the French government to deal with political conspirators without appearing as an ecclesiastical appendage and without arousing the hostility of the reform church.[70]

This Edict of Amboise represents the renewed political awareness of the Guise government as they

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[68] H. O. Evennett, The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Council of Trent, op. cit., p. 125. For the traditional interpretation see H. Lemonnier, Histoire Générale de France, op. cit., Vol. VI, first part, p. 15. Also see La Planche, pp. 66-68.

[69] Cardinal of Lorraine to Cardinals Tournon and Ferrara, 20 June 1560. Printed in H. O. Evennett, The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Council of Trent, op. cit., Appendix III, p. 476.

[70] Ibid.

began to attempt to isolate the political conspirators and prevent the formation of any future movement in which religious reform would be a basis for political opposition. While nothing was actually conceded to the reformers, the impression of government moderation was solidified by the edict and by Lorraine's insistence upon a national synod which could independently reform the internal religious abuses.

The dual effect of Calvin's denunciation and the new Guise edict was sufficiently powerful to bring the withdrawal of most of the religious conspirators, yet even the political elements of the plot became increasingly splintered and disorganized as they approached the day of attack. It was not until the end of February, ten days before the planned assault, that Condé informed La Renaudie of the court's removal to Amboise.[71] Thus, as troops from every part of France converged toward Blois, their leaders frantically began the effort to divert them toward the new goal of Amboise. La Renaudie, Castelnau, Maligny and Mazères hastened to the Chateau of Noizay, a few miles from the walls of Amboise and there began planning the new strategy of attack. But despite all their efforts, the

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[71] Romier, Amboise, pp. 83-84. Also Paillard, op. cit., p. 322.

translation from Blois had irreparably confused the military plans of the conspirators and scattered contingents arrived for a full week following March sixteenth, the new date for the attack.

At the very beginning of March, the Guise commanders captured Anselme de Soubselles, a former secretary to Antoine de Navarre, Robert Stuart, the man suspected of assassinating the procureur-général, and the Count of Arran who had opposed the Guise interventions in Scotland.[72] These three were apprehended while conducting reconnaissance operations in the Vincennes forest, just beyond the walls of Amboise. During the next two weeks these initial captives were followed by scattered groups of armed soldiers, then toward the sixteenth of March, disorganized waves of conspirators descended upon the town. The English ambassador reported that generally the Guise had sent out troops to interdict the arriving rebels and to that end St-André and 300 horsemen had been dispatched to Tours while Colligny and Nemours went into the countryside around Amboise.[73] For four days, isolated groups of

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[72]Francis II to Constable de Montmorency, 25 February 1560. Cimber et Danjou, Vol. IV, pp. 32-33. Throckmorton to Cecil, 7 and 8 March 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 437. Also Chantonnay to the Bishop d'Arras, 19 March 1560. Printed in Paillard, op. cit., p. 93.

[73]Throckmorton to the Queen, 15 March 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 452.

conspirators challenged the royal troops and were consistently supressed or captured. Francis II had pardoned the fifty men captured on the first day of the conspiracy, but thereafter the rebels were brutally executed. When the royal troops finally killed La Renaudie on the twentieth, the whole movement collapsed and its captured leaders were hung from the ramparts of the town with their heads placed upon stakes in the central courtyard.[74]

In so reducing the conspiracy, the Guise government had attempted to isolate the movement as a purely political plot directed by disaffected "lesser nobles". In doing this they had received the inadvertant aid of Calvin in separating religious dissentors from the main body of the plot. The distinction was again drawn by Francis II as he explained the troubles to the parlement de Paris. Writing fifteen days after the attacks upon his court, the king clearly distinguished between the political and religious motivation of the conspirators. His condemnation of the political opposition was extremely severe, as he charged that, ". . . they try to extinguish all [leadership] or at least reduce us to such a position

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[74]Throckmorton to the Queen, 21 March 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, pp. 462-463. La Planche, pp. 76-84.

that the authority of the king would be put at the mercy of the subject who would then be dictating the very law which he should be obeying."[75] Also Francis severely condemned the Geneva pastors who had become caught up in the spreading of political conspiracy.[76] Both of these points demonstrate the essentially accurate assessment of the Guise government in their belief that Amboise was a political plot which had been initially organized through the Huguenot pastors, a plot which was finally executed by a disorganized group of economically depressed seigneurs. Their understanding of the elements involved in the plot had aided the Guise family in combatting the conspiracy and further solidified their control of the kingdom. A concrete recognition of their success came on the seventeenth of March as the Duke de Guise was appointed lieutenant-general of France with supreme command over the royal troops.[77]

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[75]Francis II to the Cour des Parlements, 31 March 1560. Condé, Louis Ier de Bourbon, Prince de, Memoires de Condé ou recueil pour servir à l'histoire de France . . ., Paris, 1744, Vol. I, p. 95.

[76]Ibid., p. 96.

[77]Guise commission as Lieutenant-General, 17 March 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 311.

While the Guise had stabilized their internal political control, the English intervention at Amboise clearly demonstrated the extent to which their retrenchment policy had isolated the French kingdom. The extensive array of Guise allies had been allowed to wither away while the Cardinal de Lorraine concentrated upon centralizing the internal finance and administration of France. Scotland remained the only major commitment of the Guise government and even this could be maintained only by preventing a renewal of warfare.[78] The English government understood this position well and at the end of February, as the French court was preparing its defense of Amboise, the English armies were gathered for an invasion of Scotland; an invasion which was expected to force French acceptance of an English solution for that country.[79] With the failure of the Amboise attack, the Scottish invasion was delayed, but Anglo-French relations continued to deteriorate as Elizabeth issued a glaring condemnation of the Guise family. She charged that the whole Scottish enterprise

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[78] Killigrew and Jones to the Council, 14 December 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 189.

[79] Cardinal de Lorraine and Duke de Guise to the Constable, 25 February 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 285. Also Throckmorton to the Queen, 15 March 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 450.

was part of a grand plan to advance Guise interests, a plan reflected in their autocratic rule of France. She condemned their government for its failure to consult either the Dowager Queen or the French estates and she branded the Guise family as usurpers, challenging their right to rule for a "minor" king.[80]

With English relations deteriorating so rapidly, France turned to Spain seeking reinforcements for the besieged Scotch kingdom. But their Spanish connections had suffered a similar reversal since the close alliance was negotiated at Cateau-Cambresis. Throughout the decade from 1550 to 1560, the Guise party had been the greatest antagonist of Spanish power and the attitudes of the Spanish ministers remained decidedly hostile toward Guise policy. This attitude was evident shortly after the death of Henry II, when the Duke of Alba wrote to Philip II advising him to solidify the peace gained in 1559. Having done this, Spain should prevent France from any further consolidation or extension, while arousing the French Ultramontagne faction and intervening as the defender

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[80]Proclamation of Queen Elizabeth, 24 March 1560. Condé, Mémoires de Condé . . ., op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 42-48. Also Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, pp. 472-473.

of Catholic rights.[81]

The gulf between the two nations was further widened during the winter of 1559 and 1560, as Thomas de Chantonnay, the new Spanish ambassador, became deeply involved in intrigue, even to the point of advising that Catherine de Medici should replace the Guise family with the Constable de Montmorency.[82] Lorraine protested against Chantonnay's activities, yet the Guise party made every effort to remain friendly toward the Spanish court.[83] Such efforts were finally rewarded toward the end of February as the Duke of Alva promised that Spain would send aid to the French forces in Scotland.[84] This negotiation was formalized in late March when the Low Countries were ordered to dispatch a token force to aid the Scotch regent. Yetthis order was never executed and by April the Cardinal de Lorraine had

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[81]Pierre Champion, Paris au temps des Guerres de Religion, op. cit., p. 67.

[82]La Planche, p. 100. La Place, p. 53.

[83]Cardinal of Lorraine to the Bishop of Limoges, Spring 1560. Catherine de Médicis, Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 138.

[84]Negotiations between the Bishop of Limoges and the Duke of Alba, February 1560. Rélations politiques de la France et de l'Espagne avec l'Ecosse au XVIe siècle. Edited by A. Teulet. Paris, 1862, Vol. II, pp. 72-73.

despaired of obtaining the promised reinforcement.[85]

Elsewhere France was equally isolated, for the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis had effectively ended French influence in Italy and during the winter of 1560 the final Guise connections with the peninsula were severed. December had brought the death of the Duke of Ferrara, a traditional French ally and apologist, then by March the Cardinal of Lorraine rejected the protests of Pope Pius IV and summoned a national synod. Lorraine's decision culminated two years of diplomatic maneuvering, in which the Cardinal demanded both a French national council to reform the specific abuses of the Gallican church and a world council which would aim toward a reunion of all Christinas being unaffected by the earlier pronouncements of Trent.[86] Shortly after the failure of the Amboise plot, Lorraine summoned the national synod and sent Jean Babou to Rome to attempt a justification of this action.[87] But the pope firmly rejected the French proposal and by August

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[85]Duke of Alba to the Bishop of Arras, 20 March 1560. Ibid., p. 77. Also see Throckmorton to the Queen, 12 April 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 533.

[86]Evennett, op. cit., pp. 120-126.

[87]Alfonso Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 25 March 1560. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 411.

he had ordered Lorraine to cease all preparation for the synod.[88]

By the beginning of April, 1560, ten months of Guise rule had isolated France politically and religiously, and the same period had brought a concerted policy of administrative centralization and financial retrenchment. There were few innovations in this policy and its "bureaucratic" objectives were essentially similar to the earlier Montmorency goals. Even the opposition was similar, being composed of the classes which were threatened by the increasing centralization of economic and political power. The only new element in the Guise opposition was the potentially dangerous ecclesiastical structure of the reform congregations. This was the one national framework which could unite a strong resistance movement and it was this knowledge which had brought the Guise to modify and distinguish the religious policy of their government. Throughout the remaining months of 1560, the administration continued its economic and administrative reconstruction, yet in the wake of the conspiracy, these goals were integrated into the new political consciousness of the Guise government.

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[88]Paul IV to the Cardinal de Lorraine, 21 August 1560. Ibid., Appendix IV, p. 411.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAST MONTHS OF GUISE CONTROL AND THE BEGINNING OF A NEW POLICY

Throughout the first seven months of the new reign, the Guise administration had stressed the critical need for financial reform. They had attempted to arrest the economic deterioration of France by initiating a policy of financial retrenchment, a policy involving administrative consolidation both in civil and military affairs. This retrenchment had been initially effected without regard for the tenuous political and social balance within the French state, and the Guise leaders had ignored the necessity of retaining popular support. Yet as their financial policies moved in direct opposition to the long-established systems of patronage, venality, livery and maintenance, the Guise possessed neither the bureaucratic nor the military capacity to effectively implement their policy. The economies involved in this retrenchment had alienated both the feudal nobles and the "new aristocracy", the very elements whose control over local administration could hamper the execution of the Guise programs. The government had equally ignored the

fact that these opponents were more beligerent and had concentrated within the oppressed Huguenot organization. Not until February of 1560 had the Guise become aware of the extent of this resistance, and from the time of the Amboise attacks they had begun to concentrate upon a political policy of pacifying this local opposition while continuing their financial and administrative programs.

The Edict of Amboise had successfully dealt with the March conspiracy and its principles of dividing religious and political resistance became the cornerstone of Guise moderation. The Cardinal of Lorraine thus aimed at excluding the government from any responsibility for religious crimes, and by restricting its competence to matters of civil disobedience,[1] he quieted the Huguenot hostility. Yet in outlining such dependence upon the Edict of Amboise, it was necessary to clarify two vague points concerning ultimate responsibility for the "heretics". The first point concerned the fact that since the crime of heresy was not to be subject to the jurisdiction of the civil

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[1]Cardinal of Lorraine to Cardinal Tournon and the Cardinal of Ferrara, 20 June 1560. Printed in H. O. Evennett, The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Council of Trent, op. cit., Appendix III, p. 476.

court, the edict had left the "heretic" perfectly free to continue the practice of his religion. The second problem dealt with the conventicules, for while forbidding the preaching of the Geneva pastors, there had been no statement regarding government responsibility for the continuation of Huguenot worship.[2] During May of 1560, the Edict of Ramorantin clarified these points and extended the legal implications of the previous declaration. Ramorantin specified that the ecclesiastical courts were to have sole responsibility for the discovery and prosecution of the "heretics". To conform with this clause the edict exhorted the bishops and prelates to return to their dioceses and moderate the effect of Huguenot evangelism through their preaching and example. In the second part of the edict, Francis forbade the Huguenot conventicules including them within his condemnation of public assemblies and contending that to prevent a re-occurrence of the Amboise attacks,

> . . . we have forbidden and prohibited all illicit assemblies and public demonstrations, declaring those who have convened these meetings or find themselves in such assemblies

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[2]Romier, Amboise, p. 175.

> [to be] our enemies and [to be] rebels subject to the penalties which have been established against criminals of lêse-majesté.[3]

While Ramorantin appeared to represent a more rigid approach than the previous Edict of Amboise, it was far less dogmatic in its practical application. The clause giving ecclesiastical authorities full responsibility for "heretics" must be interpreted in terms of the deterioration and inefficiency of the ecclesiastical courts. The church possessed neither the staff, nor the organization whereby they could systematically root out the reformers and the edict reflected this disorder in condemning the non-residence of the French episcopacy. Equally ineffective was the clause forbidding the Huguenot assemblies, for its application was continually thwarted by the indifference and opposition of the secular judges, a problem previously faced by Henry II.[4] Thus while La Planche

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[3]Edict of Ramorantin, May 1560. Printed in La Place, p. 65. "[Nous] avons prohibé et defendu, prohibôs et defendôs toutes assemblees illicites, et forces publiques declarat ceux qui auront faict, ou qui se trouveront en telles assemblees, nos ennemis et rebelles, et subjects aux peines qui font establies contre les criminels le leze-majesté."

[4]Romier, Amboise, pp. 176-178.

condemned the declaration as a modified inquisition,[5] its actual effect upon the reform movement was negligible.

The edicts of Amboise and Ramorantin were both directed toward reaching a veiled compromise with the religious reformers. The necessity for this compromise was evident to the Florentine ambassador and in an April dispatch he noted that under such a weak king the Guise could not stand to have religious opposition added to the existing political discontent.[6] While much of the religious opposition was dissipated by the edicts, the political unrest continued and during the spring of 1560, the southern provinces became a patch-work of localized religious and feudal skirmishes. Francis II wrote during April that sections of Dauphiny and Languedoc had risen "under the pretext of religion".[7] In May the Florentine ambassador reported similar disruptions throughout Provence, then in June the English ambassador contended that the whole south was

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[5]La Planche, p. 102.

[6]Alfonso Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 23 April 1560. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 416.

[7]Francis II to M. Gaspard de Saulx, seigneur de Tavennes, 12 April 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 341. Le vicomte de Joyeuse, Lt.-Gov. en Languedoc to Francis II, 26 April 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 364.

in arms.[8] These revolts were scattered, disunited risings caused by a variety of factors, and while lacking the uniting force of the reform organization, they were serious enough to prevent the critical implementation of financial and administrative reforms.

Throughout the spring of 1560 the government worked toward redressing local problems, as the religious edicts were merely one part of a series of reforms which were aimed at regaining widespread popular support. Lacking either a feudal or "bureaucratic" structure, Professor J. R. Major has argued that the power of the "Renaissance monarch" was totally dependent upon maintaining this popular empathy. On this basis he contended that it was necessary for the monarchy to present its policies in terms which could elicit support, either through selective patronage or by resorting to popular assemblies.[9] The Guise reforms followed this general Renaissance pattern as they

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[8]Alfronso Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 4 and 15 May 1560. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 418. Throckmorton to Cecil, 24 June 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. III, p. 144.

[9]J. R. Major, "The Renaissance Monarchy: A Contribution to the Periodization of History," Emory University Quarterly, 13, 2 (June 1957), pp. 120-121.

attempted to purchase support from the princes of the blood, creating two new governments and giving Touraine, Anjou and Maine to the duc de Montpensier, and Berry, Orléans and Chartrain to the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon.[10] At the end of March, the Cardinal de Lorraine again considered popular support when he selected a replacement for Chancellor Olivier, who had died on the twenty-eighth of March, shortly after contracting a fatal illness. Three days after Olivier's death the Cardinal wrote to Nice inviting Michel de l'Hospital to accept the vacant post.[11] While l'Hospital had been a Guise partisan in his younger years, he had served as chancellor to the Duchess of Savoy since 1552 and had established considerable contacts within the reform organization. Similarly, his moderate opinions had brought him into close relations with many of the political factions in the kingdom, including Catherine de Medici who had become far more involved in the government after Amboise.[12] Coming to the office of chancellor with such connections, l'Hospital attempted

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[10]La Planche, p. 100.

[11]Cardinal de Lorraine to Michel de l'Hospital, 31 March 1560. Cited in Catherine de Medici, Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 141.

[12]Catherine de Medici to M. de Limoges, 18 July 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 143. La Planche, pp. 98-99.

to regain the confidence of various power factions, thus trying to reunite them behind the general goals of the Guise government.

Arriving at the French court on the twentieth of May, l'Hospital held interviews with most of the government advisors, and within two weeks of his arrival the new chancellor was engaged in financial conferences with the Cardinal de Lorraine and delegates from the parlement de Paris. The economic position of France had continued deteriorating despite Guise retrenchment and it was decided that further cutbacks would be necessary. The English ambassador contended that Guise calculations showed an annual revenue of only seven million francs, the greater part of which was absorbed as interest on the royal debts.[13] The French financial position had become so unstable that an ordinance was issued cutting back the royal postes and toward the middle of June the city of Paris refused a loan request from the Cardinal de Lorraine.[14] The Venetian ambassador noted that Paris had responded to the government request for 800,000 francs by noting that,

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[13]Throckmorton to the Queen, 19 July 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. III, p. 196.

[14]Ordinance of the King on the postes, 29 May 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 416.

> . . . they expected his Majesty rather to exonerate the kingdom which was greatly exhausted and reduced almost to extremities by the past grievous and incessant extortions, than to return again to burden and consume it utterly.[15]

It had become obvious by June that the economic position of France required further centralization and a continuation of retrenchment, yet to prevent armed resistance, the policy had to be justified to the local seigneurs. To achieve this and to properly ascertain the feelings within the kingdom, the Guise government summoned an assembly of the leading members of the French nobility, including the members of the conseil privé, the Knights of the Order of St-Michel and the various royal officials.[16] They were called to meet at Fontainebleau on the twentieth of August and were asked to discuss the primary grievances of the kingdom and the best means of rectifying the problems facing Francis II.[17]

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[15]Giovanni Michel to the Doge, 16 June 1560. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, p. 220.

[16]Cardinal of Lorraine to the Constable de Montmorency, July 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 452. Also Georges Picot, Histoire des Etats Généraux, Paris, 1872, Vol. II, pp. 11-12.

[17]La Planche, p. 113.

During the months from March to June, the religious edicts, the appointment of l'Hospital and the summoning of the assembly clearly indicated that the Guise government had adopted a new policy with regard to their internal opposition. Their political consciousness had led them first to disarm the Huguenot opposition, then to seek a rapprochement with the major political factions. To this end the support of Catherine de Medici had been more closely integrated with Guise policy, yet her exact relationship with the government is the subject of conflicting reports. The Venetian ambassador believed that Catherine had determined policy from the very beginning of Francis' reign, but the analysis of Romier insists that she assumed direction only after the Amboise conspiracy.[18] There is little to substantiate the Venetian ambassador's interpretation and Romier's contention rests upon the assumption that it was Catherine who caused the moderation in French policy. Romier's work overlooks Lorraine support for the division between civil and religious jurisdictions, and instead his thesis supporting Catherine's leadership

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[18]Jean Michel to Cosimo I, 16 and 30 July 1559. Printed in Armand Baschet, La Diplomatie Vénitienne, Les Princes de l'Europe au XVIe siècle. Paris, 1862, p. 496. Romier, Amboise, p. 143.

is based upon the questionable reporting of the Spanish ambassador, Chantonnay.[19] While Catherine's July letter to the Bishop of Limoges indicates a greater political awareness than her letters prior to Amboise, there is no indication that she was actually formulating French policy.[20] In fact, contrary to Romier, the correspondence of the Cardinal de Lorraine testifies to his direct involvement in shaping both religious edicts, as well as his personal selection of Chancellor l'Hospital.[21]

During the summer of 1560, the tenuous position of Guise rule dictated their attempt to embrace a wide spectrum of political and religious support without altering their essential economic program. Their lack of revenue necessitated this compromise and prohibited any attempt to wipe out the opposition in order to solidify Guise power. Montmorency had advised restoring the French

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[19]See above, p. 147 . Romier, Amboise, p. 143.

[20]Catherine de Medici to M. de Limoges, 18 July 1560. Ng., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 142-143.

[21]Cardinal of Lorraine to Cardinal Tournon and the Cardinal of Ferrara, 20 June 1560. Printed in H. O. Evennett, The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Council of Trent, op. cit., Appendix III, p. 476. Cardinal of Lorraine to Michel de l'Hospital, 31 March 1560. Cited in Catherine de Medici, Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 141.

army following the Amboise plot, but the military cut-back continued and in August the Burgundy command was halved.[22] The retrenchment had similarly affected the Guise Scottish commitment and French abuses had alienated many of the native Scots who had little sympathy for any occupation of their country. Protesting the fact that Frenchmen had received many of the most lucrative Scotch offices and benefices, major sections of the Scottish nobility turned toward England.[23] The English ambassador reported a decidedly anti-French attitude among the Scotch soldiers, noting that at the death of Henry II, the French had paid only 12,000 francs out of a total of 200,000 owed for Scotch aid in the continental warfare.[24] By April Leith had been invested by the English invaders and as it had become quite evident that the French troops in Scotland would receive no Spanish reinforcements, Mary Queen of Scots

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[22]Montmorency to Francis II, 29 May 1560. Cited in Romier, Amboise, p. 135. Francis II to the Duke d'Aumale, 9 August 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 454.

[23]Manifesto of the Lords of the Congregation, 6 October 1559. Relations politiques de la France et de l'Espagne avec l'Ecosse au XVIe siècle. Vol. II, Correspondances Françaises 1559-1573, François II, Charles IX, Marie Stuart. Edited by Alexandre Teulet. Paris, 1862, pp. 1 and 2. Sadler and Croftes to Randolph, 27 October 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. II, p. 65.

[24]Throckmorton to Cecil, 7 June 1559. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. I, p. 305.

authorized her mother, the Scotch regent, to initiate negotiations with the English representatives.[25] From the very beginning of these talks, the French ambassador had sworn that he would not insist upon retaining the Franco-Scotch accord, then with the June tenth death of the Scotch regent, Mary of Lorraine, the last remnant of French resistance was exhausted.

One month later, on the sixth of July, Montluc and Randan signed the Treaty of Edinburgh by which France surrendered her protectorate over Scotland. Only 120 of the 4,000 French troops could be retained in the Scotch kingdom and even these were restricted to the forts of Petit-Leith and Dunbar. The treaty continued, reserving the major judicial and civil offices of the kingdom specifically to Scotch natives and decreeing that in the future none of their noblemen could accept a French pension.[26] The harsh terms of

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[25]M. de Glajon and the Bishop of Aquila to the Duchess of Parma, 27 April 1560. Relations politiques de la France et de l'Espagne avec l'Ecosse au XVIe siècle, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 113.

[26]Extraits des Articles du traité faict avec les Escossois, 6 July 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 425. Also Cecil and Wotton to the Queen, 8 July 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. III, pp. 179-180.

this treaty represented the final repudiation of French expansion, a repudiation necessitated by the unsettled political and financial condition of Francis II's kingdom. Yet the necessity for this settlement was recognized by the French monarch and along with a personal letter, he sent extracts of the treaty to the Bishop of Limoges,

> . . . that the Bishop may discover its iniquity and see the hard and intolerable conditions to which he [the king] has been compelled to submit. . . . He thinks it unendurable that a great Prince such as he is, should be reduced to the extremity of receiving the law from his own subjects; but the necessity of the times, so full of calamities and miseries, compelled him rather to yield some portion of his rights thereby sacrificing his own private interests, than by obstinately adhering to them, to follow out a course full of danger and difficulty.[27]

The king's explanation reflects a similar letter from the Cardinal de Lorraine, and his stress upon moderating royal demands was in complete conformity with the new politics of the Guise government.[28]

By the summer of 1560, the problem of local opposition remained the foremost obstacle to any

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[27]Francis II to the Bishop of Limoges, 28 July 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. III, p. 194.

[28]Cardinal of Lorraine to the Bishop of Limoges, 28 July 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 442.

extension of royal power. The resistance of the old and "new" aristocracy was no longer veiled in terms of external expansion for the treaties of Cateau-Cambresis and Edinburgh had served to eliminate the conquests of the last seventy years and the bankruptcy of France prevented the proposal of any further military operation. Military expansion had been the traditional means of advancement in post-feudal France and with the possibility of conquest removed, the local nobility turned all its efforts toward preserving acquired rights and privileges. The nobles became a defensive social group determined to resist any further attempts at centralization.[29] The struggle over the respective spheres of royal and noble power had been progressing throughout the later Middle Ages, yet previously this struggle had been indirectly reflected in the conflicts over investiture, annates or military expansion. By 1560, the isolation of France and the necessity for financial reform had directly challenged the local nobility, yet until August of that year, the Guise had ignored these leaders, making no attempt at communication or cooperation with them.

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[29]Elizabeth S. Teall, "The Seigneur of Renaissance France; Advocate or Oppressor?" Journal of Modern History, 37 (June 1965), pp. 147-150.

After Amboise, the Guise came to understand the limited powers of the central administration and the limited amounts of local support for their policies. At that point, they began an attempt to establish workable relations with the local seigneurie. The first public indication of this new policy was contained in a July speech to the parlement de Paris and in this address Chancellor l'Hospital outlined the mutual responsibilities of Francis II, the seigneurie, the city of Paris and the courts of the French kingdom. The financial issue dominated his appeal, as l'Hospital argued that the death of Henry II had left Francis with the massive war debts of his father and grandfather. The Chancellor stated,

> . . . that there was a debt of more than forty-three million continually accumulating interest. That the dead king had truly restored peace, but that he had been unable to assure the well being of the society, and for the great majority the evils of warfare remained a part of domestic affairs.[30]

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[30]Speech of Chancelier Michel l'Hospital to the parlement de Paris, 5 July 1560. La Place, p. 66. ". . . qu'il y avoit plus de quarante trois millions deubs, dont couroit intereste. Que le Roi defunct à la verité luy avoit laisse la paix mais qu'il ne pouvoit jouir du bien d'icelle; et la mal de la guerre luy estoit demouré pour la grade multitude qu'il avoit des affaires domestiques."

L'Hospital contended that the debt was still increasing due to the excessive number of court retainers and army personnel, but at the same time he promised that despite local resistance the Guise policy of removing unnecessary officials would be continued. While contending that these economy measures were necessary for the normal functioning of the royal government, the Chancellor proposed a concerted effort by the local authorities to raise funds with which the debt could be eliminated as soon as possible.[31] This speech, stressing the need for economy, clearly combines a continuation of Guise retrenchment with an effort to justify and obtain local support for such measures.

The problem of actually effecting this political reconciliation had become the central issue by the middle of the summer for the numerous local rebellions had again begun to spawn an organized resistance. The scattered rebels again sought leadership from Antoine de Navarre, the first prince of the blood, and following Amboise even Navarre had become more sympathetic to their cause. His change of attitude can be seen as a direct reaction to the Guise investigations of suspected conspirators. On the eighteenth of April, Navarre himself was indirectly

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[31] Ibid., pp. 66-67.

questioned regarding the plot, as Francis II wrote that many Spaniards had accused Antoine as the primary leader of the conspiracy and even at the French court he was rumored to have signed an accord with Elizabeth of England. While Francis stressed that he placed no crediance in the charges, he asked Antoine to come to court and satisfy the government of his innocence.[32] Soon after, Navarre answered this letter admitting that he had received an English ambassador, but protesting that his devotion to Francis was never compromised and that he had never acted against the best interests of his king. Navarre went on to defend La Planche and David, two Geneva preachers who had lived under his protection. He contended that they had lived as admirable and obedient subjects, but had not been seen since the publication of the Edict of Amboise.[33]

During the months immediately following this government accusation, Navarre resistance was encouraged by the numerous malcontents who sought his leadership. The primary responsibility for instigating

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[32]Francis II to the King of Navarre, 18 April 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 366-368.

[33]The King of Navarre to Francis II, 6 May 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 369-371.

Navarre opposition rested with his cousin, the Prince de Condé, who had been deeply implicated in the Amboise plot. Following its failure, Condé had returned to the hostility of the French court, where his every movement was watched and his baggage ransacked by the sieur de Beauvais-Naugis, a gentilhomme of Catherine de Medici.[34] Following this latter incident, Condé indignantly left the court, yet already the government had become convinced of his implication in planning the conspiracy. Francis II expressed this conviction in April when he wrote to Navarre that several Amboise prisoners had named Condé as their leader.[35] But beside Condé, Navarre resistance was encouraged by numerous malcontents within the military establishment and the "new aristocracy". Among the apparent Bourbon allies was the former Guise partisan, Marshal Blaise de Montluc, whose command had been substantially reduced in the Guise military cut-back. Montluc's position appears representative of the whole military caste for even as one of the signers of the Treaty of Edinburgh, he protested the necessity for

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[34]Romier, Amboise, p. 129.

[35]King Francis II to the King of Navarre, 9 April 1560. Condé, Mémoires de Condé, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 88.

any retirement from Scotland.[36] Yet the role of Montluc within the Bourbon camp remains very questionable, for Paul Courteault noted that the Guise had previously requested his services as a spy upon Navarre activities.[37] Despite that, Courteault believes that Montluc was completely won over to the Bourbon cause[38] for in late March Antoine de Navarre wrote to Francis II criticizing him for the selection of Guise as lieutenant-general and contending that Montluc was the logical choice for such a post.[39] Also, the fact that Montluc wrote directly to the Queen Mother in criticizing the Scotch treaty would indicate that he had gone beyond Guise control.[40]

The feelings of the "new aristocracy" are similarly reflected in Montmorency's criticism of government policy, for while the Constable had nothing to do with encouraging Bourbon opposition, he remained

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[36]Ms. de Montluc and de Rendan to the Queen Mother, 9 July 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 423-424.

[37]Paul Courteault, Blaise de Montluc Historien, Etude critique, op. cit., p. 385.

[38]Ibid., p. 390.

[39]Ibid.

[40]See above, footnote 36.

firmly opposed to military cutbacks in the face of the provincial disturbances. At the end of May he wrote to the king, noting, "Sire, you could nothing more useful for your cause than to undertake a restoration of your army."[41] Montmorency felt that while an emphasis upon retrenchment was necessary, the Guise government had proceeded too rapidly and had effected numerous economies which were unwise considering the unsettled state of France. Under Henry II the Constable had always pursued a centralizing policy, but he had generally depended upon military force to maintain internal stability. He had never hesitated to crush any military resistance to his policies and had moved armies into the Vaudois in 1540, and into Bordeaux in 1548. Even in 1560, the Florentine ambassador reported that Montmorency had gathered troops to maintain his position in Dammartin.[42] With his hierarchical conception of society, the Constable felt that only force could maintain the social order which was necessary for the extension of administrative and financial centralization. But the Guise disagreed with

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[41]Montmorency to Francis II, 29 May 1560. Cited in Romier, Amboise, p. 135.

[42]Alfonso Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 21 June 1560. Nég. Dipl., Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 422.

this presupposition and during the summer of 1560, they attempted to win popular support through explaining and justifying the need for financial reform, rather than attempting a costly supression of the numerous revolts.

While the July speech of Chancellor l'Hospital set the tone for the new government political policy, it was actually the Assembly of Notables at Fontainebleau which marked the first step in this program. The assembly began as fifty-four members of the conseil privé and Order of St-Michel held their first session in the private chambers of the Queen Mother on the twenty-first of August. As the first speaker, Francis II suggested that the assembly should discuss and propose solutions for the major problems facing his kingdom. Within this context, the king specifically mentioned discussion in the areas of religion, justice and finance, as he specifically hoped for a financial solution which would not unduly burden the resources of his people.[43] These ideas were carried through in the subsequent speeches of l'Hospital, the Cardinal de Lorraine, the Duke de Guise and Catherine de Medici. Following the king, Chancellor l'Hospital contended

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[43]Niccolo Tornabuoni to Cosimo I, 25 August 1560. Nég., Dipl. Fr.-Tosc., Vol. III, p. 424.

that the assembly must attempt to penetrate through to the underlying causes of the current discontent. Stressing that the government was like a doctor who could not properly treat an illness until he had isolated its causes, the chancellor argued that the different estates must attempt to consolidate their opinions regarding the corruption existing within the church, the judiciary and the nobility of France. Having recognized these problems, the government could then proceed toward restoring the good will of its subjects.[44]

Following l'Hospital, Guise and Lorraine submitted the accounts of their administration. For his part, the Duke merely summarized the economies effected in the military organization, then Lorraine confronted the assembly with statistics treating the deterioration of the French financial position. He noted that despite its retrenchment policy, the expenses of the kingdom would again exceed its revenues by more than a million écus.[45] Finally Catherine spoke and pleaded with the gathering to advise her son, "such that his sceptre can be preserved, his subjects uplifted and the malcontents contented."[46]

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[44]La Place, p. 75.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Georges Picot, Histoire des Etats Généraux, Paris, 1872, Vol. II, p. 13.

Two days later the assembly reconvened with the intention of making specific suggestions upon the issues which the government had proposed. Francis II announced that he would begin by hearing the opinions of his councillors, after which he called upon Jean de Montluc, the bishop of Valence. But before Montluc began, the Admiral de Colligny went forward with two petitions addressed to the king from the Huguenots of Normandy. Colligny noted that he had received the documents from Francis' most faithful subjects while he was in Normandy preparing reinforcements for the Scotch campaign.[47] The first petition affirmed Huguenot support for the king and his nobles, recognizing them to be the officials ordained by God. They declared themselves,

> to be faithful and loyal subjects [who] severely condemn those who participated and planned the attack at Amboise under the pretext of religion, subjects who rendered neither their participation nor consent [to the plot which was executed] by certain libertines and athiests against whom his majesty had used great moderation considering their crime.[48]

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[47]La Place, p. 77.

[48]First Petition of the Admiral de Colligny, 23 August 1560. Recueil des pièces originales et authentiques concernant la tenue des Etats-Généraux. Edited by Lalourcé, Paris, 1789, Vol. I, p. 68.

Having thus dissociated themselves from the Amboise conspirators, the second Huguenot petition requested freedom of assembly and the right to have a temple where the word of God could be publicly preached. They argued that in such circumstances secret meetings would no longer be necessary and the king could easily prevent any unwarranted use of their conventicles.[49]

Following Colligny's presentation of the Norman petitions, Montluc began his summation of the problems facing the government. He began by noting that the difficulties encountered in maintaining civil and religious order should not be separated for they were one and the same problem. Expanding this argument, Montluc contended that,

> To remedy this great disorder, it is necessary to discover its causes and if I can speak as I wish according to my clearest and best advised judgement, I would say that religion is not the cause but has become the occasion for those who have wished to abuse it.[50]

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[49]Second Petition of the Admiral de Collogny, Ibid., p. 69.

[50]Speech delivered before King Francis II at the Assembly of Fontainebleau, January 1560 [While the document erroneously cites this date, J. R. Major has corrected it to 23 August 1560, The Estates General of 1560, Princeton, New Jersey, 1951, p. 31]. Printed in Condé, Memoires de Condé, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 323. "Pour remedier à ce grand desordre, il fault discourir d'où cela procede, et si j'en veux parler, comme je doi selon le jugement des plus clairs voyans et plus advisez, je dirai que la Religion n'en est pas cause mais bien a servi d'occasion parmi ceux qui en ont voulu abuser."

Throughout his speech, the Bishop dwelt upon the necessity of reforming both civil and religious structures as he proposed the necessity of a general return to God and called upon the king to summon a national synod of the French church. In condemning corruption and non-residence among the ecclesiastics, Montluc struck out equally against the governors, baillifs and sénéchaux who lived away from their charges, and he advised Francis,

> . . . that if it please your majesty to write each of them a long letter making known your desire that your subjects should be used to supress the rashness of the conspirators, there is no one among them who would not use his person, his possessions and the aid of his friends; and this should be done in regard to the seditious.[51]

While thus inveighing against those who used the new religion for political conspiracy, Montluc did distinguish the smaller group of true reformers. In the same manner as the edicts of Amboise and Ramorantin, he advised that these men should not be

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[51] Ibid., p. 337. ". . . que s'il plaisoit à vostre majesté leur faire escrire à chacun une bonne lettre et leur faire entendre le desir que vous avez que vos subjects s'employent à reprimer la temerité des seditieux, il n'y a celui d'entr'eux qui n'y employast sa personne, ses biens et l'aide de ses amis; et voilà quant aux seditieux."

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punished and noted that their conversion depended upon the example and good works which could only come through a revived ecclesiastical system.[52]

Montluc had sounded the keynote of the Guise program, contending that the religious revolts were merely an outward sign of the internal disintegration of authority. His solution consisted of extending the centralization of monarchial power and re-emphasizing the duties of the local agents of the king. Finally Montluc had upheld Lorraine's division between the political and religious reformers. In short, Montluc's address had served to set forth the rationale and justification for Guise reforms.

Montluc was then followed by Charles de Marillac, Archbishop of Vienne and one of the foremost members of the conseil privé. In his speech, Marillac continued many of the arguments introduced by Montluc as he contended that the security of the king was based upon "the integrity of the religion" and "the good will of the people".[53] He further developed and

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[52] Ibid., p. 338.

[53] Speech of Charles Marillac to the Assembly of Fontainebleau, August 1560. Recueil des pièces originales et authentiques concernant la tenue des etats-généraux, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 77.

supported Montluc's proposals for a national synod, noting that the conspirators had used religion as a mask for their plot. Yet it was toward governmental reform that Marillac's advice was directed and in speaking of the general discontent within the kingdom, he noted that,

> . . . when [complaints] become general and they concern the safety or injury of the state, it is necessary to return to the original legal basis upon which the state is founded, [the basis] which is none other than the three orders which we call estates, then that each of them can discuss within their assembly whatever happens to be difformed and propose the proper remedies.[54]

One of the primary complaints which should warrant a meeting of the estates was the financial problem and the fact that the king's over-burdened subjects had seen their taxes steadily increased with no apparent justification. Given the large royal debt, Marillac proposed that the king should go before a meeting of the estates and explain the great deficits which were amassed during the long periods of foreign warfare and the massive interest which had accumulated upon this debt. He argued that the treasurier should submit an explanation for the economic retrenchment and should be questioned regarding the reasons for the treasury

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[54] Ibid., p. 88.

deficit. Such a process of inquiry would remove all question and suspicion from the ministers of the king and any of their actions would have the additional support of the assembled estates.[55]

Just as Montluc, Marillac had delivered a speech which was designed to justify Guise policy and it similarly reflected their desire to attain greater popular support for the policies which they had been pursuing. Thus while Romier has argued that the decision to call an estates was forced upon the Cardinal de Lorraine, that decision was perfectly consistent with Guise politics and Professor J. R. Major has noted that one of Throckmorton's dispatches completely negates the Romier contention.[56] Marillac's retrenchment remarks were obviously directed against Guise critics who were not sufficiently aware of the French financial position. Neither Marillac nor Montluc had criticized any of the government programs and they had concentrated primarily upon explaining the rationale behind Guise actions and proposing a national synod and an estates-general where further explanation could be offered.

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[55] Ibid., pp. 89-91.

[56] Major, The Estates General of 1560, op. cit., pp. 39-41. Throckmorton to the Queen, 22 August 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. III, p. 252.

The synod for religious reform and the estates to unite the king and his people were the two concrete proposals of the Fontainebleau Assembly. In the following two days of debate these suggestions were accepted by all political factions, although on the twenty-fourth of August, many supporting speeches reflected harsh criticism of the Guise administration. The Admiral de Colligny began this attack, directing his address against the extremism of the Guise government and contending that they had isolated the king from any contact with the opposition elements. Despite this he argued that there remained a strong and substantial opposition whose opinions were reflected in the petitions which he had earlier presented, petitions which could easily have borne 50,000 Norman signatures. Following a series of similar attacks, the Duke de Guise rebutted Colligny by noting that Francis' "isolation" merely represented a government effort to prevent another incident such as Amboise. Denying the authoritarian charges against royal policy, Guise noted that he and the Cardinal de Lorraine had assumed control at a difficult time, a time when the war debts, the expenses of Henry's funeral and the costs of the Spanish dowry had emptied the French treasury. He contended that these demands had

dictated the retrenchment policy and had necessitated the military reductions as well as the cutbacks in wages and pensions.[57]

At the next session on the twenty-fifth of August, the Knights of the Order of St-Michel came forth unanimously in favor of the government proposals and on the following day Francis II closed the assembly, ordering all royal officials and ecclesiastics to return to their assigned jurisdictions and prepare for the meeting of an estates-general and a national synod.

The official edict convoking the two assemblies was issued on the thirty-first of August at Fontainebleau. In this document, Francis II specified that the estates-general would convene at Meaux on the tenth of December,

> . . . to hear and examine the complaints of all afflicted elements, excluding none, to propose such remedies as the unsettled conditions require, alleviating them such that the affairs of our nation can be rectified. . . .[58]

Francis added that at Meaux he expected to see and hear

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[57] Romier, Amboise, pp. 209-210.

[58] Edict of the King, 31 August 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 487. ". . . ouyr et examiner les plainctes de tout les aflygés et sans exception de personne, y donner tel remède que le mal le requiert, les soulager en tant que les affaires de notre état le pourront porter. . . ."

from all the principal personages of each province, bailliage and sénéchaussée. He requested that they should confer at assemblies in the principal cities of each region in order to prepare the remonstrances and complaints which would be presented to the assembly. Finally, Francis noted that his principal lieutenants and governors would submit recommendations concerning peasant grievances after visiting the towns and chateaux within their jurisdictions.[59]

The government policies had received substantial approval at Fontainebleau, but on the twenty-sixth of August, the capture of a Condé agent raised the spectre of renewed resistance by the nobility and military. At the time of his arrest, Jacques de la Sague carried letters hinting at a conspiracy which would unite the German protestant forces with Condé, Navarre, Montluc, Counseller de la Haye, Gramont, the Vidame de Chartres and some of the most illustrious of the French seigneurs.[60]

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[59] Ibid., pp. 488-489.

[60] Francis II to the Bishop of Limoges, 31 August 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 495. Romier, Amboise, pp. 215-216. Jean Michel to the Doge and Senate, 30 August 1560. Cal. S.P., Venice, Vol. VII, pp. 250-251.

Immediately upon learning of this plan, Francis II arrested the Vidame de Chartres and Robert de la Haye after which he ordered both Navarre and Condé to present themselves at the French court without delay.[61]

The Fontainebleau promises of an estates and a synod had already dampened much of the popular enthusiasm and support for rebellion and at the end of August, Montmorency had written to Condé that the coming assembly promised to appease the diverse opinions within the kingdom and lead to the pacification of all discontent.[62] Such optimistic reports from the assembly served to dissuade Navarre from any further participation in the conspiracy. Thus on the fifth of September, the eve of their initial attack upon Lyons, the King of Navarre withdrew from the already crumbling movement.[63]

For the remaining months of 1560, information upon Guise policy and attitudes is divided. Lucien Romier and Henri Naef contend that during this time the

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[61]Francis II to the King of Navarre, 30 August 1560. Condé, Memoires de Condé, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 91-92.

[62]Constable de Montmorency to the Prince de Condé, 26 August 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 481.

[63]Romier, Amboise, p. 228.

Cardinal of Lorraine again acquired royal support for his anti-Bourbon policy. Romier proposed this thesis assuming that the Guise family had lost control of the government following the Amboise conspiracy. On that basis, arguing from the dispatches of the Spanish and Farnese ambassadors, he contended that Guise power was restored through the discovery of the Bourbon plot and the suspected pregnancy of Mary Stuart.[64]

A rather different outlook is gained from the letters of Catherine de Medici and the Venetian accounts which even Romier credits as being the most objective ambassadorial source.[65] Romier's analysis is correct in that after Amboise, there was far more cooperation among the major factions within the central government, yet his proof of Catherine de Medici's leadership rests entirely upon the assumption that the dogmatic Guise faction could not have directed a policy of moderation. In fact, the letters of the Cardinal de Lorraine disprove this and throughout October they show a consistent interest in reforming the corruptions in the French church.[66] Following his successful management of the

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[64] Ibid., pp. 249-250.

[65] Romier, Royaume de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. xxi and xxiii.

[66] Evennett, The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Council of Trent, op. cit., pp. 178-183. The Cardinal of Lorraine to the Cardinal of Ferrara, 31 August 1560, Ibid., Appendix V.

Fontainebleau Assembly, it was not in Lorraine's interest to undertake a massive military offensive against his opposition. Throughout the fall of 1560, documents attest to the Cardinal's diligence in organizing a representative and orderly estates-general.[67]

It appears that the actual initiative in stemming Bourbon resistance came not from the Guise family, but from the King and Queen Mother. It was Francis II who had originally ordered Navarre and Condé to present themselves at court and he had followed up this request by dispatching a courrier to personally summon Navarre to come and defend himself against the evidence acquired from La Sague.[68] Navarre had replied that he would join the court by the end of the month, but on the twenty-eighth of September, the Cardinal de Bourbon reported that his brothers could not be expected before the end of October.[69] The guilt of

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[67]Ordinance for the payment of the costs of printing letters patent to convene the estates, 2 October 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 582. The King to the French Bishops concerning the National Council, November 1560. Ibid., p. 594. Letters to assemble the Estates, November 1560. Ibid., p. 636. J. R. Major, The Estates General of 1560, op. cit.,

[68]Instructions for M. de Crussol, despatched by the King's order to the King of Navarre, 30 August 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 482-486.

[69]Romier, Amboise, pp. 241-242.

Navarre and Condé had been established when Robert de la Haye deeply implicated both princes during his September inquest.[70] Combined with the continuing unrest in Southern France, Bourbon vascillation seems to have upset the court's previous confidence in the moderation of Guise policy. Toward the end of September, eighteen new Knights of the Order were created from the allies of Catherine de Medici, Montmorency and Guise.[71] During the first week in October, the knights were gathered in the chamber of the Queen Mother where Francis II requested that each of them swear their loyalty to him and "prepare themselves to undertake a campaign against the rebels."[72] The Cardinal de Bourbon cried out asking that the king have pity on his brothers and assuring Francis that they would be good and loyal subjects. The king answered that, "if they conduct themselves well, I will treat them as my parents, otherwise I will punish them."[73]

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[70]The Inquest of the Sieur de la Haye, 22 September 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, pp. 568-575.

[71]Throckmorton to the Queen, 10 October 1560. Cal. S.P., For., Eliz., Vol. III, pp. 340-346.

[72]Romier, Amboise, p. 243.

[73]Ibid., p. 244.

The instigating agent behind this policy of forcing Bourbon submission was Catherine de Medici and the primary proof of her direction lies in a letter through which she finally brought Navarre and Condé to join the court. Being fully aware that de la Hay had confirmed their guilt and knowing that the Knights of the Order were plotting against them, Catherine wrote to the Bourbon princes and "unconditionally assured" Navarre that he would be disturbed by no one and that he should join the court without hesitation.[74]

Upon their arrival at Orléans, Condé was immediately arrested and the remonstrances of Navarre were universally ignored. The importance of Catherine de Medici's letter and her cold reception of the resulting arrest are evident in her indifference to the protests of the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yonne. The Venetian ambassador recorded the prince's reactions in the following manner,

> The Queen-mother had given him [la Roche-sur-Yonne] a solemn promise that neither of them would be arrested and the contrary having occurred, he had remonstrated earnestly with her. She had excused herself by saying that

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[74]Catherine de Medici to the King of Navarre, 17 October 1560. Catherine de Medici, Lettres de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 150.

> the proceedings against the Prince had been taken by order of the King, her son. . . .[75]

The same Venetian report noted that the king had been decidedly hostile to both Guise and Lorraine following their late October arrival in Orléans.[76] While they had since been reconciled, Suriano's dispatch confirms the fact that both Guise and Lorraine were out of favor at the time of Condé's arrest.

Catherine's guile had stiffled the threat of a new plot and returned the court to a mood of moderation and conciliation as preparations for the December estates dominated royal activities. Caution was still evident however, and in early November the site for the assembly was shifted from Meaux to the more heavily armed city of Orléans.[77] Then approximately three weeks before the opening date of the estates, Francis II began vomiting, developing a fever and the absessed growth which finally brought his death on the fifth of December. The seriousness of his condition had not been realized and toward the end of November,

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[75]Michel Suriano to the Doge, 10 November 1560. Despatches of Michele Suriano and Marc' Antonio Barbaro 1560-1563. Edited by Sir Henry Layard. Vol. V of Publications of the Huguenot Society of London. London, 1891, p. 2.

[76]Ibid.

[77]The King to the Prévôt de Paris, 11 November 1560. Nég., lettres et pièces-Fr. II, p. 639.

the sick king was moved to Orléans to await the opening of the estates.

In the first days at Orléans, the Venetian ambassador contended that the Guise were maneuvering to obtain a compromise with the Bourbon faction and his dispatch reported that,

> . . . the house of Guise would do all in its power to unite with the King of Navarre. It was already said that the Prince of Condé would be released, that Madame Marguerite, the Most Christian King's sister, would be married to the son of the King of Navarre and that one of the latter's daughters would be given in marriage to a son of the Duke of Guise.[78]

But all of these plans were rendered inoperable at the death of Francis II, for without royal sanction the Guise family became merely another of the noble factions vying for control of the regency. France in December of 1560, returned to the political coalition concept employed under Henry II, but without a ruling monarch, the formula had lost all meaning. The political fluctuations which had characterized Henry's rule re-appeared and became more extreme as Catholics and Protestants formed into armed camps. Then began the conflict, as the next three decades of French politics became a pure and simple struggle for power.

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[78]Michel Suriano to the Doge, 3 December 1560. Despatches of Michele Suriano . . ., op. cit., p. 6.

CONCLUSION

Throughout their rise and attainment of power, Guise politics were determined by the dual influence of political transition and personal initiative. There were three distinct phases in the development of an independent Guise policy, but each new stage was built upon the previous family gains. Each step allowed them to become further entrenched within the decentralized power structure and at each stage their policy became more independent of the factors which had contributed to their initial advance.

The transformations in sixteenth century society played the initial role in the Guise rise to power and the first step in their advance was completely due to royal politics. The coming of the "new monarchy" had brought the demand for more loyal and subservient supporters and thus had Francis I turned to the Guise family. Their German and Italian connections had been the foremost objects of Francis' interest, and in order to foster these relationships, he had included the Guise among his "new aristocracy". Having achieved this initial status as partisans of the monarchy, the family proceeded to exploit their position

by establishing themselves within the arms and diplomacy of the French kingdom.

Their military and diplomatic success was the key to the second stage of the Guise advance, for with the coming of Henry II, the Constable Montmorency had emerged as the primary determinant of royal policy. Having established consolidation and coexistence as the objects of his rule, Montmorency was soon confronted by a Guise faction devoted to continuing the external involvement of France. To protect their military and diplomatic interests, the Guise became the Constable's primary opponents, aligning themselves with the dissident elements of the "new aristocracy", the military and feudal classes. By this step the family solidified their personal power, yet the divergent views of their allies prohibited the development of an independent political policy. Nevertheless, through this faction the Guise secured a strong position within the royal council and it was this body which specified French policy. Henry II had neither a comprehensive bureaucracy nor a strong military and royal policy was established according to the advice of the nobles who were expected to execute that policy. Throughout the 1550's Henry vascillated, seeking to determine the will of these supporters, and French policy fluctuated with

him alternating between the Guise and Montmorency factions.

During Henry's reign, Guise power had been effectively demonstrated in the role of an opposition element. Then, at the king's death, they assumed the official responsibility for formulating royal policy. As uncles of the youthful heir, the Cardinal de Lorraine and Duke de Guise were entrusted with full control of French affairs, thus attaining the final stage of their rise to power. During the rule of Francis II, the personal and political control of the Guise family was unrestricted. In these sixteen months the Cardinal and Duke enacted the economic and administrative centralization, which they had previously opposed, and combined it with a revised attempt to elicit political support.

This economic program was almost identical to the earlier Montmorency approach and to a great extent the Guise were faced with the problems created by their own previous opposition. In 1547, the economy had already been reeling under the war expenditures of Francis I and the general onslaught of European inflation. Then had come the decade of Guise warfare and the accompanying loans, debasement and venality which continually disrupted the Constable's reform.

Thus by 1559, two decades of economic instability had weakened the confidence of the people and undermined the French structure of authority. The most obvious expression of their discontent was the religious reform, yet the widespread political risings and the recurrent conspiracies demonstrate the deeper dissatisfaction within the kingdom.

In responding to this general malaise, the Guise had remained firm in their economic and administrative program. Rather than yield to the vested interests opposing their reform, the Duke and Cardinal sought to appeal beyond the elite groups of nobles who had sustained the monarchies of Francis I and Henry II. By August of 1560, they appealed for this broader support by deciding to convene an estates-general and a national synod. Through resorting to these representative bodies, the Guise followed the general European pattern of dealing with religious conflict, for the same solution had originally been adopted by Henry VIII and was subsequently attempted by Charles V.

This proposed policy differed from the later coalition solution adopted under Catherine de Medici and Michel de l'Hospital. The Cardinal and Duke had sought to establish a broader base of support for a

definite administrative policy. But Catherine, in the manner of Henry II, depended upon uniting the great nobles in a council which would both determine and execute all royal policy. Following the death of Francis II, Catherine's policy predominated and at the beginning of the 1561 estates, l'Hospital praised the Guise-Navarre reconciliation, stating that the basis of the new government would depend upon "the union, accord and consent of all the princes and nobles."

The impossibility of such a union was evident within a month of l'Hospital's statement, as the Venetian ambassador reported increasing dissension between the Guise and Navarre factions. Nothing from the 1561 estates suggests that the Guise proposals would have been successful, yet Montluc and Marillac had both been confident that sufficient explanation could obtain the necessary support. The explanation was never given, and under Catherine's leadership the estates never attempted to restrict the power of the great lords. Instead, the nobles were reunited within her coalition government and once again policy vascillated as it had under Henry II. This time, however, the fluctuations became even more extreme, as politics and religion were again intermingled. After fifteen months of Catherine's rule, the extremes had

polarized around the armed camps of the Guise or Bourbon parties. Then in March of 1562, the factions collided and the wars of religion were unleashed.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

For three centuries the accounts of Guise activities were determined exclusively by the writings of their contemporaries and only in the last hundred years have historians begun to critically interpret these sixteenth century accounts. The earliest sources for the family's history are the Humanist memoirs which note Guise activities within the court and armies of France. However, the most detailed accounts of their operations were provided by the Huguenot propagandists whose pamphlets and histories reached a peak of publication around 1560. While consistently condemning the family's actions, these reformers provide an indispensible source of sixteenth century information and it is their reports which must serve as the point of reference for any Guise history.

The following examination of thesis sources has been arranged in terms of historigraphical periods and as far as possible the works have been arranged in chronological order. The oldest memoirs used in this thesis were those of Martin du Bellay and in his work the influences of humanist historiography are clearly reflected in the lengthy descriptions of court

machinations and military campaigns. While his writings never break out of their humanist restrictions, du Bellay does provide a surface account of the shifting court alliances which allowed for the rise of the Guise family. In a similar nature, the sieur de Branthôme concentrated upon social relationships within the court circles of Francis I and Henry II. In the manner of Plutarch's Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans, Branthôme composed individual vignettes recalling the accomplishments and experiences of the various nobles and ladies of the court. Yet the most detailed court analysis is Claude de l'Aubespine's "Histoire particulière de la court du Roy Henri II". As Henry's secretaire d'état, l'Aubespine provides the most authoritative information on the alterations and intrigues which accompanied the accession of Henry II.

Humanist interests were further reflected in the detailed military memoirs recording the strategy and tactics of the important Guise commanders. In a formal and chronological manner, Marillac treated the the actual commencement of Italian warfare in 1556, but the account of the Marshal de Montluc was much more useful for reflecting the division and dissension within the French army as its soldiers pushed farther and farther into the Peninsula. Within the framework

of Renaissance historiography, neither author went beyond a formal listing of political events and neither of them recorded their reactions to the military reductions of 1559-1560. This lack of comment is particularly unfortunate since Paul Courteault has argued that these cutbacks actually brought Montluc to join the Guise opposition.[1] Even Francis de Guise was bound by this humanist formalism and his account of the 1558 capture of Thionville remained strictly limited to factual narration.

Humanist influences began to lose sway only as the religious factor became a prominent part of personal and historical relations. Neither the classical authors, nor their humanist counterparts had explained actions as determined by religious motivation and with the increasing importance of the sixteenth century reformation, the formal political-military structure of humanist history was no longer applicable to French society. The earliest Catholic account which treats the altering religious situation was composed by a Champagne priest, Claude Haton. His memoirs deal primarily with the eastern provinces, yet they contain valuable information which Haton gained during a trip

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[1]Paul Courteault, Blaise de Montluc Historien, Etude Critique. op. cit., p. 385.

to the French court in 1557. The reliability of his writings is reduced by the fact that Haton began composing between 1560 and 1572, reflecting back upon events which had occurred twenty or thirty years earlier. The total collection of Haton's memoirs should cover the years from 1543-1582, yet his texts from the first ten years and from the critical period of Guise rule have been lost, and other Catholic comment upon 1559 and 1560 is almost impossible to obtain.

Two Huguenot histories, the works of Pierre de la Place and Regnier de la Planche, have become the most invaluable sources for narrating the rise of the Guise family and the reign of Francis II. Both of them draw upon the information of friends in high government positions and both were determined to project the righteousness of the Huguenot cause. Early in his reign, Henry II had appointed Pierre de la Place as president of the cour des aides, but by 1559 la Place had openly espoused the "new religion" and incorporating its principles he composed Traité du droit usage de la philosophie morale avec la doctrine chrétienne. In his historical work, Commentaires de l'estat de la religion et republique soubs les rois Henry, François et Charles neufième, La Place provided a solid factual basis for the period, but grounded it in his religious

and political interpretations. He chronologically arranged events from 1556 to 1561 concentrating his efforts on the reign of Francis II. Reflecting humanist tradition, La Place frequently included such long orations as Chancellor l'Hospital's introductory speech to the parlement de Paris and the numerous speeches delivered at Fontainebleau. His work is particularly valuable for its insight into Condé's organization of an armed opposition and to this end La Place was well informed on the Nantes Assembly and the subsequent provincial resistance.

While La Place reflected his connections with the Bourbon family, the writings of Louis Regnier de la Planche were distinctly influenced by his Montmorency patronage. Again presenting a Huguenot interpretation, his Histoire de l'estat de France tant de la République que de la religion, sous le règne de François II concentrated on the Montmorency concept of religious and political moderation. It viewed the Guise party as dogmatically rejecting any moderate proposals and favoring an extreme catholic solution. In accordance with this thesis, La Planche included the full speech which Admiral Colligny delivered before the court prior to the Amboise conspiracy. He subsequently printed the text of the Edict of Amboise establishing its causal

relationship to the Admiral's speech. While retaining a chronological sequence of events, La Planche depended far more than La Place upon establishing causal connections which could discredit Guise rule and project Montmorency moderation.

The earliest compilations of sixteenth century documents were similarly aimed at substantiating the claims of rival religious and political factions. The Mémoires de Condé were a collection of letters and public acts many of which had little direct relation to Condé. In 1565 they were published at Strassburg by Pierre Estiard and their specific purpose was cited in the preface, where it was noted that the documents were "to serve scholars and those to whom God had given the gift of knowledge for writing and publishing his greatness through histories."[2] The actual collection reflects the various sources of Guise opposition as it contains 1560 exchanges with the parlement de Paris, the King of Navarre and the Queen of England. Henry Hauser in writing of the Mémoires de Condé, contended that it was the first time that a party had turned to primary texts to prove the validity of their cause.[3]

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[2]Condé, Mémoires de Condé, op. cit., Vol. I, p. vii.

[3]Henri Hauser, "Du recueil intitulé 'Mémoires de Condé'", Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine, 16 (1911), p. 51.

A similar collection was later arranged under the title "Mémoires-Journeaux des ducs de Guise" and again it consisted of a compilation of documents arranged from the notes of Millet, the secretary of the Duke de Guise.[4] The collection covers the years from 1547-1561 and while consisting primarily of Guise and Lorraine correspondence, it includes several royal edicts and proclamations dealing with the family. The collection has been particularly useful in tracing Guise relations with Scotland or with their representatives in other sections of Europe. In 1552 and 1556 when Guise interests became associated with expansion, their correspondence reflected both a technical and diplomatic preparation for warfare. The "Mémoires-Journeaux" is very detailed upon political and military operations before 1559 and upon the events connected with the death of the Duke de Guise in 1561, yet for the years 1559-1560, only the conspiracy of Amboise is exactingly described.

To reconcile the contradictions introduced by these partisan memoirs, the positivistic collections of nineteenth century historiography have been invaluable contributions. The papers of Ambassadors

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[4]Henri Hauser, Les sources de l'Histoire de France XVIe siècle (1494-1610), Vol. II (1515-1559), Paris, 1909, p. 162.

de Selve and l'Aubespine as well as the letters of Catherine de Medici have provided primary texts whereby the accuracy of the sixteenth century memoirs could be tested.

The dispatches of the ambassador to the Levant, Odet de Selve, have been particularly informative with regard to French military adventures in the 1550's. His reports were the most useful of the dispatches published in 1850 by E. Charrière in the collection, Négociations de la France dans le Levant. As ambassador for the Middle Eastern trading nations, de Selve was stationed in Venice and had access to the many sources of information within that center of diplomatic activity. De Selve is most important for his reports of Italian and German reaction to the 1552 invasion and capture of Metz. Also during the Siena issue and the Italian campaign of 1556, he sent detailed accounts of Venetian and Italian opinion concerning French politics.

The de Selve reports form a basis for criticizing and expanding upon the military memoirs of the 1550's, but it is the collected dispatches and documents of Ambassador l'Aubespine which are most essential for reinterpreting the Huguenot accounts of 1559-1560. It was in 1841 that l'Aubespine's

correspondence as ambassador to Spain was published by L. Paris in Négociations, lettres et pièces diverses relatives au règne de François II. Being a close confidant of the Cardinal de Lorraine, l'Aubespine had been consulted and informed of every major French decision taken during the period of Guise rule. His reports are most detailed with relation to executing the provisions of Cateau-Cambresis and ending French involvement in Scotland. In addition, l'Aubespine's letters regarding Guise retrenchment, the conspiracies of 1560 and the official government reforms are particularly useful in modifying the exaggerated claims of the Mémoires de Condé and the accounts of La Place and La Planche.

Beside the diplomatic reports of de Selve and l'Aubespine, the 1880 publication of the Lettres de Catherine de Médicis substantially altered the contentions of many of the early memoirs. Edited by Hector de la Ferrière, the first volume of Catherine's correspondence extended from 1553-1563. While not as politically significant as the subsequent nine volumes, it did establish the fact that until late 1560 Catherine demonstrated little governmental awareness. The most noteworthy aspect of her letters was Catherine's increasing political involvement following the conspiracy

of Amboise, and involvement which culminated in her active participation to end the September Bourbon conspiracy.

The most reliable of the French primary texts are the public acts and legislation which have been published for the reigns of Francis I and Francis II. For the former reign, the Academie des Sciences Morales has produced the Catalogue des Actes de François Ier. This publication is modeled after the catalogue which Léopold Delisle previously prepared for the reign of Philippe-Auguste. It cites the date and the main points of every royal act issued during Francis' reign thus being an indispensible source for tracing the policy of advancing monarchial favorites. Similarly detailed is Alexandre Tuetey's publication of the Registres des Déliberations du Bureau de la Ville. It provides a summary of the minutes of the council meetings of the city of Paris and has been most useful in providing details upon the 1559 financial crisis.

The most useful primary data from such sources was contained in the volumes of Estates General records prepared in 1789 by Lalourché. In his Recueil des Cahiers Généraux des Trois Ordres aux Etats-Généraux, Lalourcé listed the cahier of demands presented by each of the estates in 1561, reflecting the respective

grievances of each social grouping. Then in Recueil des pièces originales et authentiques concernant la tenue des Etats-Généraux, he published the Fontainebleau speeches of Colligny, Marillac and Montluc as well as summarizing each successive stage of the assembly debate.

While the correspondence of these official French sources is more reliable in its details, the copious reports of the foreign ambassadors provide a more complete perspective of internal politics, serving to rectify any governmental omissions. Lucien Romier believed that the foreign reports were the most valuable of the untapped sources for understanding the period prior to the wars of religion. He supported this argument by showing that while eight ambassadors were reporting from the court of Francis II, only three of them have had their correspondence substantially published and two of these were completely out of favor with the French court. Florence, Rome, Venice, England, Spain, Ferrara, Mantua and Savoy were the states having ambassadors accredited to France in 1559-1560, yet only the papers of England, Tuscany and Venice have been published. Dispatches from Rome and Spain have been partially printed and the very important Ferrara correspondence is reflected in secondary works,

but the Mantuan and Savoy papers remain completely unpublished.[5] Of the five sets of published correspondence which were consulted for this work, the Venetian representatives presented the most objective and informed accounts. The dispatches of the papal nuncios generally reflected and favored the Guise position while the representatives of Tuscany, Spain and England were distrusted by the French court and were not directly informed of government policy.

The ambassadorial reports have been absolutely essential in establishing every aspect of French politics from 1515, and it was these foreign representatives who actually provided the clearest insight into the French problems of 1559-1560. At that time most native authors were interpreting national problems in terms of the impending religious struggle, but the foreign ambassadors wrote at length upon the underlying political and financial questions which confronted the French kingdom. The Rélations of Giovanni Michel and the dispatches of the Ferrara representative, Ricasoli, were most useful in this thesis due to their concentration upon the financial problems of the Guise government and the Cardinal's

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[5]Lucien Romier, Le Royaume de Catherine de Médicis, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. xxii-xxvi.

attempts at retrenchment.

Until very recently the production of secondary works upon the Guise family closely paralleled the publication of primary sources. The early secondary authorities viewed the family in exclusively religious terms, interpreting their rule through such works as the Mémoires de Condé or the numerous Huguenot pamphlets. A more political approach was introduced during the nineteenth century with the publication of various state papers and diplomatic correspondence. Then current historiography has again revised sixteenth century interpretations by returning to the original manuscripts and placing greater stress upon the implications of social and economic change.

The first of these histories was written between 1609 and 1614 by Jacques-Auguste de Thou, the president of the parlement de Paris. De Thou was a dedicated catholic and a politique whose primary loyalty rested with the new king, Henvy IV. His work covered the years from 1543 to 1607 and for sources he depended heavily upon his father's collection of Huguenot pamphlets.[6] With such documentation his account consistently favored the reform and politique parties,

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[6]Joseph Rance, J.-A. de Thou son Histoire Universelle et ses démêlés avec Rome. Paris, 1881, pp. 59-68.

as it bore decided hostility toward the Guise position. His completed work reflected the pamphlet arguments, contending that the Guise had no legal right to the authority which they exercised.[7] Reinforced with arguments from such classical authors as Horace and Livy, de Thou combined humanist rhetoric with the religious orientation of his sources and produced the classical account of the sixteenth century.

De Thou's condemnation of the Guise family as the bêtes-noires of the French reformation remained the standard interpretation until 1849 when René de Bouillé completed a four volume work incorporating many of the newly published primary documents. Bouillé's Histoire des Ducs de Guise utilized the "Mémoires-Journeaux des Ducs de Guise" as well as the Rélations des ambassadeurs vénitiens, and it presented a politically-oriented account of the Guise rise to power. The work concentrates upon a political, factual explanation of the 1550's and is almost devoid of any interpretative comments. Its inclusion of many Guise legends betrays a lack of textural criticism and is used as a technique to avoid historical analysis. Twenty-eight years after Bouillé, Henri Forneron

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[7] J.A. de Thou. Histoire universelle de Jacques-Auguste de Thou depuis 1543 jusqu'en 1607. Initially published in Latin between 1609 and 1614. Londres, 1734. Vol. III, pp. 468-469.

extended the political explanation of Guise rule with Les Ducs de Guise et leur epoque. While both works were built upon the same primary sources, Forneron's narrative attempted to explain the significance and rationale behind the various Guise decisions. He thus accounted for their abandoning external expansion by Granville's influence at the Peronne conference.[8]

Both Bouillé and Forneron were apologists for Guise actions, yet neither of them presented primary texts which could satisfactorily undermine the historiography of de Thou, Michelet or Baird. It was not until Lucien Romier's detailed studies of the Italian archives that a decisive reinterpretation of Guise policy was undertaken. In Origines Politiques des Guerres de Religion, Romier demonstrated the sheer political nature of Guise-Montmorency politics as he argued that their respective positions rested entirely upon the strength of their supporters. Romier documented this contention with extensive citations from the Ferrara ambassador, a close confidant of the Cardinal of Lorraine. Indeed, Romier's work provides the only published key to the very important Ferrera correspondence. In 1923 this political interpretation

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[8]Forneron, Vol. I, pp. 233-234.

was extended to 1559-1560 with the publication of La Conjuration d'Amboise, in which Romier argued that the French political struggle had slowly become enveloped within the wider religious conflict. Continuing with Romier's interpretation, Gaston Zeller meticulously studied the German and Burgundian archives and in La réunion de Metz à la France he contended that the Guise party never hesitated to propose a union with the German protestants when it could advance their political strength. Also during the 1930's, H. O. Evennett produced The Cardinal of Lorraine and the Council of Trent where he argued that Lorraine stood both for church reform and for moderation in dealing with the Huguenots. Evennett supported this claim with several useful documents noting the Cardinal's opposition to Roman dogmatism.

The work of Romier and Zeller in discrediting the religious interpretation of Guise policy paralleled the research of Henri Hauser who was attempting to re-structure the whole causal explanation of sixteenth century change. In 1930 his La modernité du XVI^{e} siècle contended that religious change was merely one expression of the intellectual explosion which had altered every aspect of sixteenth century society. Special stress was placed upon the economic dislocation

which contributed to the social, political and intellectual upheaval, and in Recherches et Documents sur l'histoire des prix en France Hauser published lists of major commodity prices at the various markets in the sixteenth century. As an example of inflationary prices the work is useful, yet it fails to account for years of famine or crop failure when food prices rose unevenly.

Interest in sixteenth century economics has provided the material with which the whole political and social structure may eventually be reinterpreted. In 1934 Earl J. Hamilton published American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain, a work which reached some striking conclusions regarding the European importation and dispersal of American gold and silver. In applying Hamilton's findings to France, the recent works of Frank C. Spooner and Bernard Schnapper illustrate the economic uncertainty which pervaded the sixteenth century. They both concentrated upon the crisis which affected the means of financial exchange, as Spooner treated the currency debasement of the 1550's and Schnapper wrote of the new economic significance of the rentes. Equally useful is the study of Paris grain prices by Micheline Baulant and Jean Meuvret, for unlike Hauser's earlier research,

they have used the years of famine and scarcity as a control over the price increases, thus revealing more accurately the nature of Paris inflation.

Recent French historiography has continued exploring the various questions of sixteenth century economics to the virtual exclusion of political and social issues. Professor J. R. Major has somewhat balanced this concentration through his studies of representative assemblies in sixteenth century France. Yet, Major is the exception and only last year Frédéric Mauro deplored the fact that geographical and economic advances had not been accompanied by a rethinking of the accepted political and social explanations of the period.[9]

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[9]Frédéric Mauro, Le XVIe siècle Européen, Aspects Economiques. Collection Nouvelle Clio. Paris, 1966, p. 351.

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[9]Frédéric Mauro, Le XVIe siècle Européen, Aspects Economiques. Collection Nouvelle Clio. Paris, 1966, p. 351.

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